

School of Theology at Claremont



1001 1409689



# The Library

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE  
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

# CENTRAL CHURCHMANSHIP

OR

THE POSITION, PRINCIPLES AND POLICY OF  
EVANGELICAL CHURCHMEN

IN RELATION TO

MODERN THOUGHT AND WORK

BY

J. DENTON THOMPSON, D.D.

BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN

AUTHOR OF "GOD AND THE SINNER," "PROBLEMS OF CHURCH WORK," ETC.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK, BOMBAY AND CALCUTTA

*Price One Shilling Net in Paper*

*Or Two Shillings Net in Cloth*



CENTRAL CHURCHMANSHIP

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

GOD AND THE SINNER: or, some Fundamental Truths of Christianity, illustrated from the Parable of the Prodigal Son. *Second Edition.*  
Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d. net.

CONFESSION, ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE  
AND THE PRAYER BOOK. (*English Church  
Manuals.*)  
Fcp. 8vo, One Penny.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.,  
LONDON, NEW YORK, BOMBAY AND CALCUTTA.

---

PROBLEMS OF CHURCH WORK.  
Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d. net. *Second Edition.*

GEORGE ALLEN AND CO., LTD.,  
44 RATHBONE PLACE, OXFORD STREET, LONDON.

BX  
5125  
T5

*Thoburn*

*already in  
42*

# CENTRAL CHURCHMANSHIP

OR

THE POSITION, PRINCIPLES AND POLICY OF  
EVANGELICAL CHURCHMEN

IN RELATION TO  
MODERN THOUGHT AND WORK

*Evangelicals*

BY

J. DENTON THOMPSON, D.D.

BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN

AUTHOR OF "GOD AND THE SINNER," "PROBLEMS OF CHURCH WORK," ETC.

THIRD IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK, BOMBAY AND CALCUTTA

1913

Theology Library  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
AT CLAREMONT  
California

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.**

*First Printed, October, 1911.*

*Second Edition, January, 1912.*

*Third Impression, January, 1913.*

## PREFACE.

THE title of this book clearly explains its objects and contents. In it I have sought to prove that Evangelical Churchmen stand, or ought to stand, for Central Churchmanship. With this end in view I have defined, what seems to me, their position in the Church, historically and ecclesiastically; I have then reviewed what, in my judgment, are their fundamental principles; and, finally, I have ventured to offer some practical suggestions of general policy. It is important to a true understanding of the book that I should make it clear, what to me is self-evident, viz., that Evangelicals are not to be classified under any of the popular titles by which the different schools in the Church are described. We are not "High Churchmen," neither are we "Low Churchmen," nor are we "Broad Churchmen," although in different ways we have affinities with each. We are essentially Central Churchmen. We occupy a position, both in doctrine and practice, somewhere midway between the various parties. Wherein we differ from, and agree with, our brethren of other schools will appear as the book is read. All that I need say here is, that if I prove my case, no doubt can remain in the minds of any one, that with a distinctive position we have a definite mission. Some have suggested that inasmuch as, speaking generally, Evangelical principles

have permeated the whole Church, our mission has been fulfilled, and is therefore at an end. I do not share this belief. As I mark the currents of thought and watch the trend of tendencies, I am convinced that Evangelicals have still a part to play, and an increasingly important part, in the life of the Church of England. No one can foresee the issues of the present condition of affairs, and yet every one must admit that if they are to be left to extremists to decide, nothing but disruption awaits us. If, therefore, my contention be a sound one and Evangelical Churchmen stand for Central Churchmanship, their position and co-operation will be increasingly recognized and welcomed by all who desire to uphold the essentially central character of the Anglican communion. Therein lies, under God, the hope for the future. Moderate men must understand each other better by coming together more. Unity is strength. And if all who hold fast to what is truly Catholic in our great inheritance and, at the same time, stand true to the main principles of the Reformation, will develop the sense of oneness, we need have no fear for the future of the historic Church. To those who read this Preface it will be evident that my purpose is peace rather than conflict, not bitter controversy but better understanding. I have simply stated my convictions fairly and, of course, kindly, without any desire to reflect upon those of others. No one can feel more than I do, how imperfect and inadequate these statements are. Indeed I ought perhaps to add that I have not written as a scholar, nor even as a student—although I hope I do study—but rather as a busy man for busy men, in the hope that a brief survey of outstanding facts may help us all in this time of stress.

My readers will remember that I live and work in the centre of a city of strenuous life. This fact, while it may partly account for my devotion to and desire for "Central Churchmanship," certainly leaves me with little leisure for writing books. Under a sense of duty, however, the attempt has been made, and I send it forth at this blessed season with many prayers that there may come to the Church a quickening of our sense of corporate unity, a refilling of the Holy Spirit's power, and a reconsecration to the world-embracing work of witnessing for our Living Lord.

J. DENTON THOMPSON.

THE RECTORY,  
BIRMINGHAM.

WHITSUNTIDE, 1911.

## SECOND EDITION.

THAT a second impression of a book issued on October 1st, should be called for within three months is the best evidence of a widespread interest in the subjects with which it deals. For this I am profoundly thankful, especially as it bears witness to a desire for Central Churchmanship and for making or keeping Churchmanship central. Under the stress of a call to another sphere of work I find myself unable at the present time to do more than revise here and there a word or phrase with a view to making clearer my meaning. Later on, if a third edition is necessary, I may further explain where I am thought to be obscure and expand where

it may seem to be desirable. Now, I can only content myself with acknowledging most humbly the Divine blessing which has rested upon the effort and thanking most heartily both those who have so kindly testified to the help they have received through it and the writers of the articles and reviews which have appeared in the press.

One point, however, I wish to make clear. What I claim is, not that all Central Churchmen are necessarily "Evangelicals," but that all "Evangelicals" are essentially Central Churchmen. The distinction is important. There are many who, while not avowedly or definitely members of the Evangelical School of thought—even though some are in fact truly Evangelical—are nevertheless central. My hope and prayer is that all who hold fast to the central truths of our faith, by whatever name they may be called, will feel after and find a deeper and fuller fellowship in the Gospel of our One Lord and Saviour, to the furtherance of His truth and the centrality of His Church.

"In the midst" of the Church and "in the midst" of the Throne is the Living Christ—the Divine-human Redeemer of the world. As we advance under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the knowledge of Him who is the centre of all things, so assuredly will Central Churchmanship increase and abound. The nearer we come to our Incarnate and glorified Lord, the closer will be our fellowship with Him and each other.

With my constant prayer that He may continue to own and bless this second effort which has this end for its first object.

THE RECTORY,  
BIRMINGHAM.

CHRISTMAS, 1911.

### THIRD IMPRESSION.

WITH the exception of a few verbal alterations, made to make clearer my meaning, the third impression is issued unchanged. The widespread interest aroused in the subject confirms my experience that there is a steady growth of church opinion towards centrality and for this I am devoutly thankful. Believing as I do, that in this lies our strength and even safety, I am anxious to do anything I can to encourage all schools of thought to come together with a view of learning from each other. Mutual suspicion and ecclesiastical prejudice are the deadliest foes of our corporate life. To help in dispersing these and in promoting a better understanding between Churchmen of all parties I would again commend this little book to the great Head of the Church.

J. SODOR AND MAN.

BISHOPSCOURT,  
ISLE OF MAN.

CHRISTMAS, 1912.



# CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	v
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	xi

## PART I.

### THE POSITION.

CHAP.

I. VIEWED HISTORICALLY . . . . .	1
II. VIEWED ECCLESIASTICALLY . . . . .	9

## PART II.

### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES.

III. THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE AND ITS RELATION TO (a) INSPIRATION, (b) HIGHER CRITICISM . . . . .	17
IV. THE CENTRALITY OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST AND ITS RELATION TO THE HOLY COMMUNION . . . . .	31
V. THE NECESSITY FOR THE WORK OF THE HOLY GHOST AND ITS RELATION TO HOLY BAPTISM . . . . .	48
VI. THE LIBERTY OF ACCESS TO GOD AND ITS RELATION TO (a) THE MINISTRY, (b) CONFESSION . . . . .	60

## PART III.

### GENERAL POLICY.

VII. SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS . . . . .	82
VIII. THE NEED FOR A SPIRITUAL REVIVAL . . . . .	88



## INTRODUCTION.

MISUNDERSTANDINGS so often arise through the lack of definition that I will begin by defining my terms. By Central Churchmanship I mean the state of those Churchmen who occupy a central position in the life of the Church. They are to be found not at this extreme or that, but towards or at the centre. In so large a body of truth as that which is embraced by the Christian creed, there must necessarily be differences of opinion. We discern such differences even among the inspired writers of the Bible. In the Apostolic Church there were diversities of "gifts," "ministrations," "workings" (1 Cor. XII. 4, 5, 6). The standpoints of St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, and St. John, from which they viewed the truth, were not the same. The four Evangelists differ in their records of the one Life. Everywhere there is variety. And indeed it must be so. No finite mind can grasp infinite truth. Our capacities vary no less than our points of view. We see things differently. Again, it is natural for men who think alike to come together and form groups. Agreements unify. Not that all men can agree on all things, but the greater agreements will tend to obliterate the smaller differences. They agree to differ that so they may unite together. All this is natural, if not necessary. The evil in the good begins to show itself when agreements fossilize and become rigid, or when men act together as if between them they embraced the whole truth, or when they condemn all who differ from them as being without understanding. Schools of thought may easily contain men of learning who will not learn.

Parties may consist of men who are dominated by partisanship. Groups of men may become blinded by prejudice. Then it is that the search for fuller truth is arrested and its discovery is difficult. Then it is that the good of parties is overcome of evil. Then it is that "the people perish" because there is, alas! "no vision". Admitting, therefore, the naturalness of the unifying forces of agreements, we must be on our guard against incident dangers, we must watch against inherent perils, we must preserve ourselves from the rigidity of death.

A review of the condition of the Church of England at the present time illustrates the thought I wish to express. We all thankfully recognize the diminishing strength of partisanship. Mere shibboleths do not now meet with the fervid response of past days. Schools of thought are increasingly learning from each other. The outlook is brighter with the promise of larger charity and greater comprehensiveness. And yet there are still some clouds on our horizon. Now and again we meet with men whose narrow outlook and rigid attitude have stunted their growth, hindered their influence, and blighted their fruitfulness. They are to be found not in one party, but in all parties. They disfigure every school of thought. They weaken the whole Church. Nor are they all of the clergy, some are in the ranks of the laity—extreme men, zealots, partisans—men whose devotion we may admire but whose narrowness we pity, whose sincerity may be great but whose charity is small, who may work assiduously by themselves but cannot work harmoniously with others. No one can doubt the earnestness of their convictions. What I doubt is the character of their Churchmanship. No one denies their

devotion to their own cause and its limitations. What I cannot admit is their loyalty to their own Church and its comprehensiveness. The extravagances, however, of extreme men have helped many to perceive the weakness of their position and the danger of their attitude, with the result that there is an increasing body of Churchmen who disown all party names and avow themselves as "moderate Churchmen" or prefer to be called simply "Churchmen". This movement is all to the good, if it avoids the perils of shallowness. Some there are, I know, who think that a tolerant spirit is inconsistent with strong conviction, that breadth and depth are rarely, if ever, found together, and that open-mindedness leads to mere vagueness of vision. I do not admit this. To me it is quite possible to combine a courageous faith with a wide charity, a clear view of truth with the sense that all truth is not seen, a firm fidelity to what is entrusted to us with a kind feeling towards those whose trust is different. I cannot, therefore, concede that parties necessarily involve partisanship or that schools of thought should not consist of men willing to learn.

But even if, as I think is the case, there is less party spirit in the Church, and all schools of thought are approximating by the power of mutual influence towards the common centre, it cannot therefore be argued that Central Churchmen, at least with any sense of fellowship, are not needed. In my judgment they are more than ever needed, and especially as a centralizing force. The future of the Church is largely in their hands. The solution of our problems lies, in the main, with them. When this is seen more clearly than at present, the main body of moderate Churchmen will

unite and increase, while extremists will diminish in numbers and power. For this reason I hold that Evangelicals have a great and growing mission, especially in the development of Central Churchmanship. Nothing is more certain than that the English nation will never follow the National Church in a return to mediæval doctrines, nor will Churchmen as a whole ever consent to the surrender of her reformed character. The future must, therefore, disclose a growing desire for unity on the basis of the Bible, the Creeds, and the Prayer Book. Schools of thought, as they learn more of each other's ways, will influence each other more. All parties in the Church will understand each other better, and better co-operate with each other. The great historic Church of England, in a revived and unified life, will thus rise in fuller power to fulfil her mission to the nation, the empire, and the world.

Holding these convictions, I am certain that it is necessary from time to time to consider afresh our position, principles, and policy as Evangelical and Central Churchmen. At any rate this is the object I have set myself to realize in the subsequent chapters. In Part I we will review the situation both from a historical and an ecclesiastical point of view—where we stand in the history and constitution of the Church. In Part II we will reflect upon the main fundamental principles of Evangelical Churchmen with special reference to present day questions. In Part III we will resolve to readjust our methods to the changing conditions of the time, and so direct our energies as to make ourselves more efficient, thus hastening the coming of the great revival in the spiritual life of the Church for which we hope, and work, and pray.

## PART I.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE HISTORICAL POSITION.

THE history of the Church of England during the eighteenth century gathers round and centres in the Evangelical revival. What the Church, and through it the nation, owes to that great spiritual quickening can never be fully recorded. Nor is it possible for us here and now, to do other than rekindle our imaginations by contact with the authorities and realize what was the religious condition of the country when the revival began. Our purpose will be served if, by a necessarily brief glance, we are able to form a just estimate of the position in the Church, which history has secured for all time to Evangelicals. One of the most significant sidelights on the state of faith at that time is the well-known statement of Butler: "It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not so much a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. Accordingly they treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed on point among all people of discernment." Further light is cast upon the bishop's own attitude of mind when, despairing of the Church's future as it is recorded, he even refused the offer of the Primacy. The fact is that the doctrines of pure deism had so permeated all sections of the people as to produce a state of general spiritual paralysis in which Arianism and

latitudinarianism were the outstanding features. Those, like Butler, Paley and others, who defended the orthodox position, notwithstanding their great ability, seem to have lacked the inspiration of hope born of faith in their own convictions. Strong men as they were, the pessimism of the age affected their judgment and weakened their witness. Hope cannot long survive the decay of faith, and even faith requires hope to perfect its mission. Again, the bishops with few exceptions were mere creatures of the Court, in bondage to Erastianism or worldliness, and destitute of spiritual qualities worthy of their position. Probably the most glaring illustration of episcopal inconsistency was that of Bishop Watson, who was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, when, to use his own words, he "immediately applied himself"—and by inference not before—to the study of the subject he was expected to teach! While holding this important office, he accepted the bishopric of Llandaff and combined with this dual position the rectorship of no fewer than sixteen parishes in different parts of the country—residing not in his own diocese, where he was seldom seen, but at Windermere, where he spent most of his time as "an improver of land and planter of trees". With such "blind leaders" what hope could there be for the guidance of the people? Nor were the clergy as a whole any better than the bishops. They were "courtiers, politicians, lawyers, merchants, usurers, civil magistrates, sportsmen, musicians, stewards of country squires and tools of men of power".<sup>1</sup> Allowing for some exaggeration in the statement, it must have been sufficiently accurate to apply at least to a very large number of the clergy. And indeed we know from other sources that this was

<sup>1</sup> Blackburne's letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

so. Blackstone tells us that he "went from church to church in London" and that "it was impossible for him to know whether the preacher were a follower of Confucius, Mahomet, or of Christ". It is true that "the bishops and clergy were better than their compeers, they were not immoral but they were as a whole 'earthy'; their sermons were not fired by conviction but were common-place moral essays; they preached a life of enlightened self-interest and lived as they preached".<sup>1</sup> The inevitable result of this spiritual stagnation in the religious leaders was an indescribable growth of irreligion, profanity, and immorality amongst the people in general. "Of the prominent statesmen of the time, the greater part were unbelievers in any form of Christianity, and distinguished by the grossness and immorality of their lives. Purity and fidelity to the marriage vow were sneered out of fashion," while the poor "were ignorant and brutal to a degree which it is hard to conceive, for the vast increase of the population which followed on the growth of the times and the development of manufactures had been met by no effort for their religious or educational improvement. Not a new parish had been created, hardly a single new church had been built. Schools there were none, save the grammar schools of Edward and Elizabeth. The rural peasantry, who were fast being reduced to pauperism by the abuse of the poor law, were left without moral or religious training of any sort."<sup>2</sup>

It was at such "a time of spiritual deadness and coldness, of servility and legalism, of low ideals and materialistic standards,"<sup>3</sup> and, we may add, of increasing

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Church of England," Patterson.

<sup>2</sup> "History of the English People," Green.

<sup>3</sup> "The Church and the World in Idea and History," Hobhouse.

depravity, that the Evangelical revival took its rise. The Spirit of God brooded over the disorder, darkness, and death, evolving order out of chaos, dispersing darkness by light and imparting life to the dead. It is important to remember that this quickening of the religious life of the nation began in the National Church, and yet not so much in the Church as a body as in the hearts of individual Churchmen. John Wesley and Whitfield, the first recipients and instruments of the revival, were both clergymen of the Church of England. Differing in many respects of character and power, they were nevertheless one—one in the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and one in their burning desire to preach the Gospel of salvation to all men. Wesley, the son of the rector of Epworth, had been influenced from his birth (1703) by a saintly mother, and later by Law's "Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life". When elected Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, he formed a society for the promotion of spiritual life. From the rules and methods of life adopted by its members Wesley and his followers were stigmatized "Methodists". Failing, however, to find the peace and power he sought by such means, he sailed for Georgia (1735) and there worked as a missionary among the settlers and natives. In three years (1738) he returned still with a sense of failure, and at a meeting of the Moravian brethren in Aldersgate Street, London, he experienced the spiritual crisis of his life which issued in such fruitful service for God. "I felt," he says, "my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation, and an assurance was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death".

In the year 1736 George Whitfield was ordained

on Trinity Sunday at Gloucester, and the same evening preached his first sermon which, it was reported to his bishop, "drove fifteen persons mad". Thus began the great revival which produced results in the Church and the world no historian can record. Both Wesley and Whitfield, endued with power and burning with zeal, travelled everywhere regardless of ecclesiastical order and clerical protests, and always with the same results. Crowds of every class flocked to hear the message of salvation. Hearts were "broken" and made "contrite" under the power of their preaching. "Men and women writhed in physical agony, confessing their sins till they were comforted by the assurance of the Divine forgiveness." Conversions were proved to be real by permanently changed lives. The grace of God was magnified in the eyes of the people. The Gospel was seen to have lost none of its ancient power. But the tragedy of it all lies in the fact that the Church of England, alas! proved herself unable to receive and contain the movement thus inaugurated. The bishops were hostile, and the clergy helpless. Nothing was done to welcome the new missionary zeal nor to guide its operations. Instead of this, everything that could be devised was set in motion to arrest its progress. The inevitable result, which to-day we all deplore, was schism. The worldliness of the Church cast out both Wesley and Whitfield from their spiritual home, and although the former lived and died a Churchman, desiring that, in England, his followers should remain in her communion, yet it cannot be denied that his methods were frequently hard to reconcile with Church order.

There were, however, those who, sharing in the blessings of the revival, remained faithful to the

historic Church. Notwithstanding the persecutions to which they were subjected alike by the bishops and their brother clergy, they refused to surrender their heritage. To these men was given the name "Evangelical". It is important, therefore, to remember that this name was not historically applied to all who sympathized with the revival even as it was not appropriated by any. Like the title "Methodist" it was bestowed from without as a term of reproach, then accepted by those it was intended to describe, and afterwards passed into common use. That the "Evangelicals" were a section only of those who shared in the revived life of the Church, that they consisted of those who continued loyal to the Church's system and order, and that they did not originate the title they bore, are facts, which, though frequently forgotten, have an important bearing on the right use of the term to-day. As a matter of history, the "Evangelicals" were so called, because as Churchmen they stood, in the opinion of others, for the Evangel of Jesus Christ, then, even more than now, discredited and despised. Whether all that the word expresses or involves was intended is beside the question. We are concerned at the moment with what happened. Historically there is no doubt that the title "Evangelical" was applied to a body of Churchmen who preached and lived the Evangel of Jesus Christ. Nor has the succession thus inaugurated ever ceased, neither is it one of which any Churchman need be ashamed. It has been well said that "Fletcher of Madeley, Grimshaw, Berridge, Henry Venn, Romaine, Newton and Scott the commentator among the earlier, Charles Simeon, Isaac Milner, William Wilberforce, Henry Thornton, Zachary Macaulay, John Venn and others among the later

Evangelicals, will always remain honoured names in the history of the Church of England".<sup>1</sup> If from the past we turn to the present, it is as the heirs and successors of these gifted and sainted men that "Evangelicals" retain and use the title they have inherited, nor are they prepared to surrender it, until such times as that of "Churchman" is sufficient. As long as differences continue among the members of the same Church, so long will they unite as well as divide, and groups or schools of thought be formed. Such groups of Churchmen must necessarily be defined, and until they cease to exist must bear some distinguishing title. No one will deny that these party names or titles are in themselves unsatisfactory, that they are sometimes misleading, and not infrequently stand themselves in need of definition. For this reason some discard them altogether. Many more would rejoice, if it were possible, to exclude them from ordinary use, but is it possible? Our greatest danger seems to me to lie not so much in parties as in party spirit, or in other words, in the parts deceiving themselves as if they were the whole. Schools of thought are not necessarily evils in the Church. The evil only begins when men refuse to learn in the wider university of knowledge. But as long as schools of thought and parties exist, so long will names and titles be needed. All that we require is to remind ourselves continually that the Church is greater than the party, and that all parties in the Church share much truth in common. "The Catholic party," as it is called, may seem to reflect upon Evangelicals as if they were not equally members of the Catholic Church or not truly Catholic, and in the same way "the Evangelical party" may seem to suggest that other schools of thought have neither part nor lot in the

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Church of England," Patterson.

Evangel of Jesus Christ. But with necessary reservations the terms are generally understood, and for the present it would appear they must remain. At any rate one of the most remarkable spiritual movements in history preserves for all time the position of Evangelicals as an integral part of the Church, a position which cannot be denied or ignored by the candid and honest student. Let a closing testimony be given of one in whose wide outlook and sound judgment all parties trust. "The Evangelical movement awoke the Church from the lethargy into which it had fallen. The simple Gospel preaching which characterized it reanimated the whole ideal of personal religion. On its piety, on its self-denying and often pedantic excellences, on its loving devotion to Holy Scripture, on its philanthropic work for day schools, Sunday schools and ragged schools, for prisoners and slaves, were built up those English households which, more than any others, have given to our country the moral stability and purity that have enabled her to pass so steadily through the tremendous period of expansion and transition which this century has witnessed. . . . In every mission, at home and abroad, in every slum service, in every cottage address you may hear the echo of the old Evangelical revival."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "On the Church of England," Bishop Ryle (Dean of Westminster).

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ECCLESIASTICAL POSITION.

IN reviewing the position of Evangelicals in the Church of England we must differentiate between the revival of the eighteenth century and the existence of Evangelicals before that time. A revival does not denote the genesis of life, but its requickening, and for the origin of Evangelical Churchmen we go back to the Church of the first century. In other words, we claim that our position is involved in our membership of the Catholic Church. We are primarily and fundamentally Churchmen—not simply by birth and education but also by choice and conviction. We are the lineal heirs, with our brethren of other schools of thought, of the Church founded in ancient Britain and afterwards enlarged and enriched by the fusion of other missions. In this succession there has been no break. The Reformation was, as the word denotes, a re-formation of the historic Church. It involved no alteration in her constitution and no change in her continuity. It simply expressed the inherent right of the national Church—a right which she had never surrendered, but again and again asserted—to be free to legislate within her own domain. In harmony with this right the Church of England reformed herself by an appeal to the teaching of the Bible and the usage of antiquity. But the reformed Church remained still the ancient Church. In other words, the Church of England did not sever

herself from her Apostolic lineage, but is to-day the direct heir of the Church of the first century. Both the Roman Communion—as a branch of the Catholic Church in this country—on the one hand, and the Nonconformist Churches on the other, have all come into existence since the sixteenth century. The former is literally an intrusion of a foreign Church, or, as defined by the late Archbishop Benson, “an Italian Mission,” while the latter have been formed at different times and by various methods. The Church of England is without doubt historically and lineally the national branch of the Catholic Church. It is true that we do not refuse the term Church to our Nonconformist brethren even as we use it of the Roman Communion, but by being courteous to our fellow Christians, we must not be misunderstood as surrendering our claim to be the natural heirs of the Church of primitive Christianity. In the fellowship of this Church, Evangelical Churchmen were born. They are equally, with other schools of thought, members of the historic Church. We are then first and foremost Churchmen, and not, as we be slanderously reported and as some affirm that we are, dissenters in the Church. As a matter of fact we dissent from nothing in the doctrine and order of the Prayer Book. On the other hand, we accept with all our hearts the standards of the Church’s faith and worship. Some of us desire to see the Prayer Book revised and enlarged without disturbing its doctrinal balance or its symmetrical proportions, while others prefer that it should remain as it is without alteration or addition. But if we differ—as do other schools of thought—on the proposal to revise the Prayer Book, there is no division amongst us in our reverent attachment to its order and doctrine. Our founders were true, and some even strong Churchmen. They stood apart from, and

opposed to, those whose irregular or irreverent discharge of their duties had brought the Church into general disrepute, and equally from the Methodists, who in their spiritual zeal and devotion came to disregard all ecclesiastical law and order. They were distinct from "Low Churchmen" whose defective Churchmanship they resented and condemned. Their whole attitude was that of men who, conscious of a revived spiritual life, sought to quicken the Church by methods wholly consistent with her system. What is true of the Founders of the evangelical party is equally true of most of its later Leaders. They too were strong, convinced, and central Churchmen. Further, spiritual men as they were, keeping first things first, they were not unmindful of other claims, which by some are thought to be unspiritual. Their sympathies embraced all necessities of life. They were pioneers in social reform. They were leaders in all forms of philanthropy. They toiled with—in those days—rare devotion for the physical, intellectual, as well as spiritual benefit of the children and the poor, of prisoners and slaves. Nothing in fact which touched human life was exempted from their thought and work, while in missionary zeal at home and abroad they stood pre-eminent in their day and generation. Of their character and influence two testimonies may be here quoted—"A religious revival burst forth which changed in a few years the whole temper of English society. The Church was restored to life and activity. Religion carried to the hearts of the poor a fresh spirit of moral zeal, while it purified our literature and our manners. A new philanthropy reformed our prisons, infused clemency and wisdom into our penal laws, abolished the slave trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "History of the English People," Green.

Again, "These men will be held in everlasting remembrance for many reasons. They illustrate the nature of the Evangelical movement at its very best. They were all men spiritually earnest, gifted with a sense of things unseen, with the innocence of the dove they combined the wisdom of the serpent, and this worldly wisdom they spent in spiritual and moral ends. In the abolition of the slave trade they took the most prominent part. The education of the poor, the cleansing of prisons, the erection of Sunday schools, the founding of libraries—all these received due attention. The real living force in the Church during the first thirty years of the nineteenth century was to be found in the Evangelical party." <sup>1</sup>

It must, however, be admitted that Evangelicals have not always maintained these high ideals of Churchmanship. There has been unquestionably a falling away on the part of some of the rank and file of the party. What was originally a true spiritual movement on sound ecclesiastical lines lost with some its power, and with others its proportion. In the former case, it declined into a formal and negative Protestantism, and in the latter, it drifted into a rigid and literal Puritanism. To protest against papal pretensions and to negate the views of others seems to have been the chief aim of some who claimed to be Evangelicals, while to deprive the Churches of dignity and beauty or the services of reverence and order, became at least the unconscious outcome of their ministry.

We cannot, however, forget that all who call themselves Evangelical are not "Evangelicals". Hence has arisen the confusion of thought which persists in some quarters of describing "Evangelicals" as

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Church of England," Patterson.

"Low Churchmen". The two are in reality distinct. The former consists of those Churchmen who, interpreting the formularies of the Church in the light of the Evangel of the New Testament, find nothing in the Prayer Book inconsistent with their faith, and while heartily accepting its doctrine, loyally maintain its order. The latter comprises those Churchmen who appear to hold "lower" views of the Church, the Ministry, and the Sacraments than seems consistent with the plain teaching of the Prayer Book, and are not always careful to observe its directions. There are, however, signs of spiritual recovery on every hand amongst those who are true Evangelicals. They are reasserting the positive principles of their faith with a due regard to the changing currents of thought, with a growing desire to work with other schools of thought in the larger life of the Church, and with a spiritual power and unction which augurs the best for the future.

Again, some declension from the high ideals of the Evangelical founders and early leaders must be, I think, admitted in the attitude of some later Evangelicals to what may be briefly defined as Social problems. And here perhaps I may be permitted to quote my own words in another connection.<sup>1</sup> "Evangelical Churchmen are doing a quiet, unobtrusive, and truly redemptive work no human arithmetic can calculate on what are called spiritual lines and within parochial limits, but we have nevertheless not followed as closely as we ought in the footsteps of the Evangelical fathers, many of whom were pioneers in social reform. We have inadequately realized that these problems are not only economic and social, but are also moral and spiritual. We have not sufficiently recognized the formative influence of

<sup>1</sup> "The Ministry of the Church of England."

environment on character and the determining force of material circumstances on moral conditions. We have, alas! allowed the leadership in social reform to pass from us into the hands of others. But, thank God, a newer and truer spirit is rapidly spreading amongst us. What we can do, we ought to do and we will do, to help in the solution of the problem. We are determined to cry aloud and spare not against all laws, forces and customs which hamper the honest poor or hinder the willing workers from obtaining their just rights. We are resolved to insist that a fair wage, a decent dwelling, an even chance in life, and a respectable livelihood shall be the heritage of all who deserve them. Nothing that can in any degree contribute to the social settlement of the people must be ignored. The powers of local administration and of national legislation must be pressed into the service of social reform. It was the Evangelical revival which swept away by statute force the abominable slave trade. It was the Evangelical Shaftesbury who led the crusade which brought into being the beneficent Factory Acts. No timidity must enfeeble our efforts. No hesitation must dishonour our principles. Many of us, as the official representatives of a National Church, refuse to ally ourselves with any political party—Unionist, Radical, or Socialist. For me, at any rate, the Church Socialist League has no attractions. It is, I think, a well-intentioned but misguided movement. The Christian Social Union alone offers us an organization untrammelled by party ties in which we can unite with our fellow Churchmen of every type, in prayer and study and work, and by which we can influence the best men of all parties, if only because we are the slaves of none. But whatever method we may choose—and in this, as in other matters, we must claim a reasonable

liberty—we intend to do our utmost to permeate all possible forces in the work of social reform, with the spirit and power of Christ's Evangel. This, indeed, is our peculiar mission. By these methods we shall do our part to liberate millions of men, women, and children from the cruel bondage of social degradation. By these methods we shall secure for them a better chance of caring for their souls and of hearing the Gospel message, and for ourselves a greater hope by a better moral condition for the reception of the truth, which can alone make them wholly free."

Turning now from the position of Evangelicals as Churchmen we may briefly refer to their position in the Church. They are, as before stated, neither "high" nor "low". They are central Churchmen. They are higher than the "low Churchmen" and lower than the "high Churchmen". They occupy historically, ecclesiastically, and doctrinally a middle position. As such, they are marked out for a special mission in the Church. They are destined to influence both sides of Churchmanship in the future, even more than they are doing in the present and to a degree which is impossible to those of either a higher or lower type. Their centrality offers them an unique opportunity of preserving the essentially central character of the Church of England. This opportunity must not be lost. Our distinctive mission must be fulfilled. The Church of England must be kept true, on the one hand to her Catholic inheritance and on the other to the Reformation Settlement. If she forfeits the one, or departs from the other, nothing but disruption awaits us. Those who fail in realizing the glory of their heritage will, we trust, see the error of their ways, and those who "repent of the reformation in tears and ashes" will,

we pray, repent of their repentance. In bringing about such a consummation of existing divisions, so devoutly to be wished, Central Churchmen must necessarily play an important part. Notwithstanding the ominous signs and dangerous tendencies, to which I have before alluded, I am filled with the optimism of faith. I cannot bring myself to believe the dear old Church of England, which God has cleansed and defended for so many centuries, has fulfilled her mission and must be removed from her place in ruins. I am persuaded, on the other hand, that if only we are faithful to Him, we shall see men, as time goes on, less and less drifting to this extreme or that, and more and more approaching towards the common centre. Central Churchmanship will be, I hope and pray, the predominant Churchmanship of the future. But even if I am over-sanguine, and as some would say the clouds presage a storm which is certain to break up the national Church—which God forbid!—even then, it will be found that Evangelical Churchmen have played their part with loyal brethren of other schools of thought to save the Church for the nation and the nation for primitive Christianity.

## PART II.

### CHAPTER III.

#### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES—I.

#### THE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES AND ITS RELATION TO (a) INSPIRATION, (b) HIGHER CRITICISM.

ASSUMING that our position in the Church as loyal, convinced, and central Churchmen is established, let us now pass to consider some aspects of the essential principles for which we stand. What is the system of doctrine which differentiates Evangelical Churchmen from their brethren of other schools of thought? In seeking to give a brief, and therefore inadequate, reply to this question, it may be well at the outset to remove a possible misunderstanding which seems to exist in some quarters. We do not claim a monopoly of the principles we profess or the doctrines we hold. Far otherwise. What we contend is that our system, in its harmony and completeness, is distinctive. In other words, we believe that the relation and proportion in which we teach accepted truths justifies us in being regarded, and regarding ourselves, as a separate school of thought in the Church. We, of course, recognize that we are one with all Churchmen in holding the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith. We believe in the same Bible. We confess the same Creeds. We use the same Prayer Book. We are members of the same Church. The verities, therefore, by

which we are united, are greater than the differences by which we are divided. Our variations indeed frequently only show themselves when we seek to define the relations or explain the proportions in which we believe certain articles of the common faith. These divergences will be apparent as we proceed to state as positively as is possible what are the distinctive principles for which we stand in doctrine, as Evangelicals, and in position, as Central Churchmen.

In the first place, we believe that the Bible is the final and ultimate authority on all questions of faith and life. The Holy Scriptures, in other words, determine our doctrine and practice. We admit, of course, that authority may be justly claimed for the Reason, the Conscience, and the Church, but to us these are not final and absolute. The right of private judgment, for example, must be related to the right of the Church, within certain limits, to legislate for her members. Both rights must be conceded. No thoughtful man, conscious of his liability to err, will lightly set up his own opinion against the judgment of the Church, even as the Church must guide her decisions by a still higher authority. He will recognize that, as an individual, he is more likely to be mistaken than the whole body of the faithful. The "Fathers"—as the early leaders of the Church are called—will always speak to him with a great authority especially on those subjects on which they are agreed, still more, the whole Church by its Creeds and Councils; and yet no man will forget, with befitting solemnity, that in all matters of controversy, the right of appeal to the final court remains to him as an inalienable responsibility. He will recognize that the Church as a Divine society received from the Lord authority "to bind and loose," that to St. Peter, as its representative, was

given “the keys,” or in other words the right to open and shut the door of membership, and that even Apostles were subject to ecclesiastical discipline. At the same time, he will remember that the primitive Church, in all matters of faith, appealed from its own authority to the teaching of the Lord and the Scriptures, that the same rule was observed in the later controversies with the heretics, and that our own Church in the 16th century unquestionably restored the Bible to its original position as the final arbiter in all questions of doctrine. This then is the first of our fundamental beliefs. We feel that reason has its rights in matters of faith—and indeed it is the element of reason in faith which differentiates it from superstition. The rights of conscience are also admittedly most sacred and ought therefore to be preserved from all unlawful interference. The Church, in like manner, justly claims the loyalty of her members to the standards of faith. Yet behind all these authorities are the Holy Scriptures as the fount and standard of doctrine. The Bible is then, to us, supreme. Its supremacy is absolute. Its sufficiency is complete. Its authority is final. We do not appeal from the Bible to the Church or the Conscience or the Reason, but from all these to the Bible.

That this belief is in harmony with the teaching of the Church can scarcely be doubted. The Sixth Article declares with no uncertain sound for “the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures”—“so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith”. The Eighth Article on “the Three Creeds” affirms that they “ought thoroughly to be received and believed,” and then states the reason why—“for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scrip-

ture". The Twentieth Article on "the authority of the Church" rightly claims that "the Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies," and then proceeds to limit its authority—"and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's word written". The Twenty-First Article on "the authority of General Councils"—the highest authority which can be claimed for the Church—reminds us that "they may err and sometimes have erred. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture." Other references might be made, but these are adequate to prove that, in terms free from all ambiguity, the Church of England holds to the supremacy of the Bible as the final and ultimate authority in matters both of belief and practice.

In declaring for this supreme authority of the Scriptures it is impossible within the compass of this volume to vindicate our faith against every form of attack. It must suffice here and now to say that the Divine authority of the Bible is either involved or expressed throughout its varying contents, and that this authority was recognized by the Jews, so far as the Old Testament is concerned, and by the Christian Church in regard to the whole Bible. On the face of it, men who really know its contents, enter into its spirit and perceive its purpose, must experience great difficulty in denying the claims which such a book everywhere makes. But a higher ground for the authority of the Bible exists than even its own inherent claims or the testimony of the Christian consciousness, viz. the authority of Jesus Christ. There is no doubt that the collection of writings we call the Old Testament was

accepted by the Jews in the time of our Lord, and accepted not simply as books of history, poetry, and prophecy, but as in and through these a progressive revelation from God. It is equally certain that these Scriptures with their inspired character, were recognized by Jesus Christ and also that He appealed to their Divine authority. There can be here no room for the argument that this recognition was only an accommodation to the current opinions of the age. The question is too vital to be thus explained. The writers of the Old Testament base their authority on conscious revelation. "Thus saith the Lord," or its equivalent, is used by them about two thousand times. Moreover, their writings are bound up with the history of the Jews which, as a history, is not only exceptional but is also prophetic. In other words, the books of the Old Testament are not merely the religious writings of an exceptional race and in this sense are exceptional. The whole history converges on the person of Christ. He is the key to the Old Testament. We cannot in fact judge truly of the history apart from the person who interprets it. Our Lord's attitude therefore to the Old Testament must be explained by what He knew Himself to be in relation to it. No mere accommodation to the Messianic belief of the Jews can explain this attitude. Such statements as e.g. "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy but to fulfil" (St. Matt. v. 17), "The Scripture cannot be broken" (St. John x. 35), "The Scriptures . . . bear witness of Me . . . If ye believe Moses, ye would believe Me, for he wrote of Me" (St. John v. 39-46), "That the Scripture might be accomplished" (St. John xix. 28), "Beginning at Moses and the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (St. Luke

xxiv. 27), and many others, illustrate both our Lord's recognition of the authority of the Old Testament and of its relation to Himself.

The authority of the New Testament may be claimed on similar principles. In the first place, there is the claim expressed or involved that the writers wrote under the direct guidance of the Spirit of God. Secondly, the books which were to form the Canon—that is the authorized collection—were adopted only as the result of prolonged consideration. The Church did not hurry to a decision, but once the decision was made, it was final. The New Testament then became with the Old the recognized standard of Christian doctrine. In addition, however, to the authority which the New Testament bears on its surface and to the authority which belongs to it as having the seal of the primitive Church, we must remember, as in the case of the Old Testament, its vital relation to Christ. He is the primary authority for both Books and in Him both are one. The Bible is the revelation of Christ. Christ is the interpretation of the Bible. The writers of the New Testament were either men who had been chosen to be Apostles and trained in the apostolate to whom the Lord promised the special guidance of the Holy Ghost, or men who were in closest fellowship with them. These Apostles or Apostolic men were so imbued with and inspired by the Spirit of Christ, that their writings unfold before our wondering eyes the person and teaching of Christ Himself. The authority of these books is therefore determined in part, by their character and in part, by their contents. They reveal to us the truth as it is in Jesus and He is “the truth,”—of God and man. If authority is that which compels obedience, that to which we feel it right to submit ourselves, then the au-

thority of all authorities is Jesus Christ. Our hearts discern in Him the whole truth. We have indeed the witness in ourselves. We know the truth and to it, or rather to Him, we submit our hearts in loving obedience. His authority is complete and final. But the truth we know, in other words, we know Jesus, not through reason—for reason is not a source of knowledge, but simply a method by which we know—but by revelation, i.e. the Bible. The highest and ultimate authority then of the Bible is Jesus Christ. Because in it we find Him and because He is the truth, so it is true. Both the internal and the external witness to its authority thus pass into the self-attesting evidence of its supreme claim to our acceptance and obedience.

This being our attitude towards the Bible, how, we may proceed to ask, is it affected by such questions as are involved in inspiration and construction? To what extent is our belief in the authority of the Scripture conditioned by our acceptance of it as inspired by God or even by the traditional view of its interpretation and arrangement? These are solemn and pregnant questions which plunge us at once into the arena of controversy. And yet, even though it be so, this is no reason why we should surrender to a feeling of panic, why we should not in patience possess our souls. In matters of judgment, nothing is gained and much is lost by letting passion run riot. If we are called to discuss any question we must do it calmly or not at all, especially when momentous issues are at stake.

#### ITS RELATION TO INSPIRATION.

First, then, let us consider briefly the inspiration of the Bible. Little need be said on this subject, partly because as Evangelicals, we are all agreed that the Bible

is a collection of books inspired by the Holy Spirit and partly because the matter has already been to some extent dealt with. When, however, we come to think deeply of inspiration we feel how full of mystery it is. We cannot understand either the nature or action of spirit, least of all the influence and interpenetration of one spirit on or by another. And if this be true of human spirits, how much more is it true of the Spirit of God? We are in the region of mystery where reverence is essential and dogmatism impossible. We have all felt the power of inspiration and yet we know not all of the power we feel. We experience far more than we understand. That the Scripture "is given by inspiration of God," that "no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," we unhesitatingly believe. There is no doubt in our minds on this point. The Bible would not be the Bible to us, if it were not the word of God speaking to us of things divine. But when we come to analyse the fact and seek to define its exact nature, power or extent, we expect to differ, as differ we do. In inspiration we have two persons to consider, the inspiring Spirit and the spirit inspired—the Holy Spirit who inspires the human spirit. How far is it possible for all men to subject themselves alike to the inbreathing of the Spirit of God, and then to reveal what they have received, is a question for which we have no authoritative answer. Some believe that the human personality was so completely absorbed by the inspiring Spirit that freedom even of utterance was not permitted, whilst others believe that personal liberty was not suspended but simply employed as a medium to convey the revelation. In the former case, both the truth revealed by the Spirit, and the instrument by which

it was conveyed at the time, were alike infallible, while in the latter a fallible agency was employed to express in the terms of imperfect personality the infallible truth. No one of course denies that in inspiration personality played a part. The question which divides is the extent to which it was permitted freedom—not in the truth itself, but in the form of its transmission. Here it is important to remember that the Church, whilst holding the Bible to be inspired, has given no definition of inspiration. Churchmen are therefore free to exercise the right of private judgment on the subject, and Evangelicals are as unfettered as are other schools of thought. Individuals must accordingly be left to answer for themselves questions affecting not inspiration itself but its nature; not whether the writers of the Bible were inspired, but the extent to which the Spirit controlled their words; not the revealed truth, but the mode of the revelation.

#### ITS RELATION TO HIGHER CRITICISM.

Secondly, let us turn our thoughts to the construction of the Bible. There can be no doubt that what is termed "Higher Criticism" has revolutionized the opinions of many regarding the structure of the Bible. The application of scientific methods to its study begun in the eighteenth century has produced results which, if not destructive of what may be termed the traditional view, at least call for its modification. The subject is much too complex and many-sided to be discussed here, even if it were within the scope of my purpose, which of course it is not. And yet, conscious that we are again invading a province of thought which is agitated by controversy, I cannot on that account refrain from offering a few suggestions which may perhaps help some

during the time of stress. A subject cannot be ignored simply because it is difficult, nor dare we shirk a duty because it is unpleasant. Criticism has come to stay. Some at least of its "results" are sufficiently "assured" as to require at least our attention, if not our assent, and these results we must seek to relate to our faith. What then should be the general attitude of Evangelicals towards the principles of Higher Criticism?

(a) We must rescue ourselves from any prejudice or apparent prejudice against "Higher Criticism" or indeed criticism of any kind. Every sensible man admits that critics have not only a perfect right to express their opinions, but that criticism not seldom serves a useful purpose in the common life. At any rate we must safeguard ourselves from prejudging matters which have not yet been fully or adequately considered.

(b) We must differentiate between critics and critics, criticism and criticism. To charge all "higher critics" with a desire to dislodge faith in the Bible as a revelation from God, or to condemn all criticism as subverting the character of the Scriptures as divinely inspired, is to be guilty of gross exaggeration if not untruthfulness. Such wholesale charges cannot be proved and ought not to be made.

(c) We must recognize that all questions of history must be considered historically and all matters of evidence must be dealt with scientifically. No theological prejudice must hamper the free exercise of investigation and no religious prepossession must rule out of court reliable evidence from whatever source it comes. Every Christian should treat honest critics and fair criticism with calmness and justice, with patience and trust.

(d) We must acknowledge that "higher criticism" is mainly academic, requiring expert knowledge. Those,

therefore, who have neither the ability nor experience to judge of such matters would be well advised either to suspend their judgment or at least not advertise their ignorance. Let scholars do their own work and let us do ours. "*Magna est veritas et praevallet.*"

(e) We must remember that, without denying that some results are with practical unanimity accepted, there are others on which "higher critics" are not agreed, some of which are important, if not vital. While therefore the battle rages and its issues are still uncertain, let us possess our souls in the patience of hope. Meanwhile archæology is bringing to light hidden treasures which cannot but affect some questions in dispute. With advancing knowledge of every kind, we can afford to wait with patience the disclosures of the future.

(f) We must accept the assurances that "higher criticism" does not necessarily involve a denial of the Bible as an inspired revelation nor a repudiation of its supreme authority. On the other hand, we must believe what some critics, and those who think with them, say, that their faith in and love for its teaching have not diminished but rather increased. Many of its difficulties, they tell us, have been thereby removed and many of its mysteries explained by, what they call, the "rediscovery of the Scriptures".

(g) We must admit that on the question of "higher criticism" Evangelicals are divided. Any doubt on this point has been dispelled by the recent correspondence in the "Record" and the still later statements in the "Churchman". Men of acknowledged ability and, at least on other points, of unquestioned orthodoxy have declared themselves for and against both its principles and results.

With these considerations before us—and I have en-

deavoured to state them fairly and frankly—we can only arrive at one verdict, and for the present, leave the matter to be decided by the right of private judgment. The case calls for a reasonable liberty and charity. Neither side has the power or the right to oust the other from the ranks of Evangelical Churchmen, and however much we may differ in our conclusions we must learn to respect the convictions of others. All that seems to me essential is that, whether we retain the older and traditional view of the Bible, or accept the newer and critical views, we hold fast to its supremacy as the final court of appeal on all matters of Christian doctrine.

This belief in the Bible as the supreme standard of spiritual truth and teaching is not, in my judgment, affected necessarily or in essence, by questions of date, authorship, construction or interpretation. We may differ in our opinions as to when, or by whom, certain books were written. We may not agree on the degree in which the writers composed or compiled their writings or on the human sources from which they gathered their knowledge. We vary in our interpretation, some regarding as figurative and illustrative that which others understand as literal and historical. What seems to me essential and on which there is no difference of opinion, is the authority of the doctrine—the truth of the teaching—of the Bible. We recognize the existence of much that is true in the sacred books of other religions, but we claim that the Scriptures are unique in character, contents and purpose. While we admit that they were not written to teach science and that the writers were not scientifically in advance of their day, we believe that the Bible cannot be explained by a naturalistic hypothesis but that its authors were inspired by God to reveal His mind and will to men. We re-

pudiate the suggestion that this Book of books is simply a collection of religious literature, bound together in a haphazard fashion without unifying principle or purpose. On the other hand we affirm that a "library of volumes" though it be, written in different languages and ages, by men of varying capacities and stations, it is nevertheless one book, that its unity is to be traced to the Divine authorship of the Holy Ghost, and that its chief end is the progressive revelation of redemption culminating in the person and work of the Redeemer. These are the principles which constitute the authority of the Bible. If its books, as we believe, were given by inspiration of God and record the gradual unfoldings in history and experience of the plan of salvation, with the corresponding preparation of the world for the advent of the Incarnate Saviour, then they are, to us, authoritative. However we may differ in methods and details, on the accuracy of this scientific expression or the historicity of that recorded incident, on the literal or the metaphorical interpretation of certain passages—all of which are secondary—we cannot but hold fast to fundamental principles and judge of the Bible by its spirit and purpose. What is primary is the doctrine of God and man, the revelation of redemption, the spiritual message, which it contains. This, and not its form, is that which makes the Scriptures for us the standard of Christian teaching. This, and not its mode, is that which gives to the Bible its supreme authority in matters of faith. Whatever opinions we may form on questions of its construction or its interpretation, we maintain that the Word of God must guide and govern the reason, the conscience, and the Church. The whole subject turns on our faith in a revealing and redeeming God. If we believe that man being a sinner, a revelation over and above that

which we have in nature, history, and human nature is necessary, and that this revelation would naturally take the form of an incarnation with a view to man's redemption, then the whole principle of the Bible is conceded. In it we have a progressive unfolding of a Divine purpose which realized itself in the person and work of the Incarnate Redeemer. By the light of this unifying purpose we can alone understand the teaching of the Old and New Testaments. With this faith and in this light, the Bible must ever stand above all other authorities as their source and standard. By its truth we must prove all things, base all creeds, test all teaching, refer all claims, direct all worship, and govern all life. "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth. But the word of the Lord abideth for ever, and this is the word of good tidings" (1 Pet. i. 24-5). "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (St. Matt. xxiv. 35).

## CHAPTER IV.

### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES—II.

#### THE CENTRALITY OF THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST AND ITS RELATION TO THE HOLY COMMUNION.

THE second fundamental principle in the Evangelical faith is the centrality of the death of Jesus Christ. To us, the cross is the central fact in the Christian creed. Christianity, in other words, is the religion of redemption, and the redemption of the world has been effected by the Divine Sacrifice of the Cross. We believe that "the Word" who was "in the beginning with God and was God" became flesh, being born of the Virgin Mary. Why? Primarily that He might fulfil the Divine law for human life and redeem the whole world from sin to God. The Incarnation may conceivably be related to other objects beyond our present powers of knowing, and certainly involves revelation—the revelation of God and man—but its primary purpose is always connected in the Bible with the redemption of the world by the sacrifice of the Cross. Jesus Christ, alone among the sons of men, was born to die. Bethlehem was the beginning of His journey to Calvary. The shadow of the Cross rested on His manger and onwards throughout His whole life. His incarnation was a necessary condition of, and preparation for, His death. The death, however, was not the closing event in His life. It was the crown-

ing purpose of His birth. At different times and in various ways the Lord predicted His end in terms which leave us in no doubt that in His view He lived to die. To quote all the passages in which He alluded directly and indirectly to His death, its meaning and purpose, is impossible, but the following may be given as showing what was in His mind—"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (St. John II. 19). "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (St. John III. 14). "The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many" (St. Mark x. 45). "I will give My flesh for the life of the world" (St. John vi. 51). "The Good Shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep" (St. John x. 11). "This is My body which is given for you. . . . This cup is the new covenant in My blood, even that which is poured out for you" (St. Luke xxii. 19-20). The references might easily be multiplied, but these are sufficient to indicate that His death did not come to our Lord in the nature of a surprise, nor as a foregone conclusion, not even as a heroic act of self-sacrifice to seal the doctrines He taught. No. He knew beforehand the manner, nature, and object of His dying. He recognized that His life on earth would fail in its mission and lose its meaning if it were not "laid down," "given up," sacrificed, to redeem the world. But again, if we turn from the words of Christ to the writings of the Evangelists, we are at once impressed with the fulness of details with which they relate the incidents leading up to the Crucifixion, as well as of the tragedy of Calvary itself. We have only to note the proportion in which the story of the passion is recorded as compared with the rest of the Lord's life to be convinced of the significance in which His death was viewed by the writers.

Further, if we turn to the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles we are again confronted with the paramount place assigned to the Cross in the preaching and teaching of the early Church. "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified" is the centre and kernel of the Apostolic witness. The Evangel of the New Testament concentrates on the death of the Cross. Propitiation, redemption, regeneration, reconciliation, justification, acceptance and future glory are all related to, as springing out of, the Sacrifice of Christ. It is "the blood of Jesus" which is the Divine "propitiation" (Rom. III. 25), by which we are "justified" (Rom. v. 9), by which we have "forgiveness of sins" (Eph. I. 7), by which "we are made nigh" (Eph. II. 13), by which our consciences are "purged from dead works" (Heb. IX. 14), by which "we are sanctified" (Heb. XIII. 12), by which we are "redeemed from our vain manner of life" (1 Pet. I. 19), by which we are "being cleansed from all sin" (1 John I. 9), by which we are "redeemed unto God" (Rev. v. 9), and finally by which we are "made conquerors" (Rev. XII. 11).

The primary doctrine of the New Testament is, without doubt, the efficacy of the death of Christ. The whole gospel of redemption centres in this fact. The Cross is indeed the very heart of the Christian system. But let no one suppose that this thought of the centrality of the death of Jesus involves any disproportion in our view of His life, before and after the Cross. The former was the means by which as man and for man He fulfilled the law of God, and so lived as to be the perfect pattern for human life. The latter is concerned with the outcome of His crucifixion in mediating the life He had won through death, "in bringing many sons into glory" by His intercession above and by

His Spirit below. But the Cross is the centre. To it, His incarnate life antecedently led up, and from it, His risen life subsequently flowed. In other words, we may say that as the incarnation necessitated the crucifixion, so the crucifixion necessitated the resurrection. If Jesus were the Eternal Son of God—as He claimed to be, and on the charge of which He was condemned to die—“it was not possible that He should be holden by death”. The Resurrection was therefore necessary that thereby His Sonship might be “declared with power” and His sacrifice proved to be accepted and therefore effectual. So also the Ascension was a natural stage in the application of His completed atonement as His return in glory will be the consummation of His redemptive power. But the whole purpose of His incarnate life centres in the Cross. There He “made by His one offering of Himself once offered a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world”. There the redemption of the human race was, as it were, focussed in the sense that the love of God and the sin of man, with the victory of love over sin, are revealed in their deepest reality and fullest significance. The death of Christ was in fact the decisive hour in the history of mankind. Both the judgment and the salvation of the world culminated in the Cross. “The death of Jesus is, in some sense, the centre and consummation of His work. It is because of it that His risen life is the hope which it is to sinful men.”<sup>1</sup> We cannot therefore separate the life before or the life after His crucifixion from the death itself. No. The death of Jesus was the end of His life. The “loud voice” which proclaimed as with a shout of triumph “It is finished,” was the Lord’s

<sup>1</sup> “The Death of Jesus,” Denney.

own seal to a consciously fulfilled purpose. He came from heaven to earth to die for our sins, and "the death that He died, He died unto sin once" (Rom. vi. 10). "This He did once for all when he offered up Himself" (Heb. vii. 27). His death was not, as often with us, an interrupted effort. It was an accomplished object. It was the baptism wherewith He knew He was to be baptized and He was straitened until it was accomplished. The death of the Cross was His chief vocation in life. It was the end for which He lived. By it He completed the work His Father had given Him to do in this lower world. "We must die and leave things unfinished. He did all things well—at the right time, in the right place and in the right way, neither too much, nor too little—'It is finished'—it was done and He could rest."<sup>1</sup>

In the course of my argument for the centrality of the Cross I have not been unmindful of the attacks made by certain critics on the authenticity of the Gospels, nor the efforts to reduce the number of reliable sayings of our Lord to a minimum, if not to vanishing point. If I have seemed to ignore them, it is because the defence of the Synoptists and St. John does not fall within the purpose of my book, and also because the criticism, even if it were reasonable, which it is not, does not invalidate my argument for the centrality of the Cross in the Christian system. What is historically undeniable is that the Church was built upon the foundation of the crucified and risen Lord, that the first preachers of the Gospel concentrated their message on the facts of His death and resurrection, and that Christianity has continued to live and grow unto this day by the acceptance of their teaching as true. The foundation still carries the building. The Church still lives to

<sup>1</sup> "The Incarnate Saviour," Robertson Nicoll.

bring life to the dying. The truth still abides to win the assent of men. Those who laid the foundation are gone. The first founders of the Church are not with us. But their writings remain, to assure us of their belief, to witness to their preaching, to prolong to us their mission. We at least know on what, and how, the Church was built. Nor can the foundation be destroyed as long as the edifice which rests on it stands. The testimony of the first disciples is based on their experience of the person and work of Christ. On the crucified and risen Lord—the Rock of ages—the Church was unquestionably raised and securely rests. “The gates of hades shall not prevail against it.” But if the books of the New Testament disclose to us the faith of the first preachers of the Gospel, then we have in their faith the truth of Christ, the truth He taught, and lived, and was. The revelation of Himself and the purpose of His life is preserved to us in their experience and testimony. “It follows that the view of Christ’s place and person which pervades the New Testament is authoritative for us. The Christ it preaches is the Christ God sent. The depth, directness, sureness, and uniqueness of the inspiration guarantees the reality and deity of the manifestation. If God produces a special understanding of the fact, He must have produced the fact. If the Apostles so moved saw in the resurrection of Christ such significance, then the fact itself is not at the mercy of historical evidence. The act of faith when it rises to inspiration gives us the reality of its object in giving us its power. If God made men so to read and trust the resurrection power, He could not be misleading them as to the creative fact it streamed from. The same spirit effected both. If inspired knowledge grew out of a certain fact, that fact is a part of God’s

revelation. We cannot take the resurrection Gospel and leave the resurrection fact. So also with the Cross ; and so with the person of Christ. If the Apostles were right in believing that their interpretation of the central things, the creative things—details and peripherals do not concern us—were given them from the Lord : then the fact was so. If they were wrong about their authority and centre, the outlying pieties of such fanatics have little worth, however beautiful.”<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, such an experience as unquestionably the Apostles had, was antecedently necessary to the fulness of their testimony. Time must be given for them to appropriate and assimilate the truth in all its completeness, ere they could give to others their experience of its power. The life and words and works of Jesus are the seed thoughts from which germinated and developed the Apostolic testimony as it is preserved in the Acts of the Apostles and the other books of the New Testament. Nor must we forget that “ to expect from Jesus a theory of the atonement and to reject the subsequent Apostolic doctrine of the Cross wherever it goes beyond the words of Jesus, is to ignore the necessary conditions for such a sacrifice of vicarious love. The value of this Sacrifice must be expressed in the Christian life before the significance of the Cross could be interpreted by Christian thought. It was the Spirit of God who guided the Apostolic Church into all the truth about the death of Christ. We have a right then, nay it is our duty to turn, to the Apostolic teaching, especially the doctrine of Paul, to whom the Cross meant more than to any of the other Apostles, that we may learn the meaning and the full worth of the experience of Jesus.”

<sup>1</sup> “ The Person and Place of Jesus Christ,” Forsyth.

<sup>2</sup> “ Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus,” Garvie.

It is not within the purpose of my present effort to refer to the attempts which have been made to explain the mystery of the atoning death of Christ. All I desire to do, here and now, is to accentuate its centrality both in the New Testament and the Evangelical Creed. At the same time, it may be well to say that the key to its true interpretation appears to me to lie in the Divine-human personality of our Lord. He is both God and man. As such His sacrificial death must be viewed both from its Godward and its manward side. Neither God nor man can be separated from either His sufferings or the sacrifice they expressed. In other words, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 19). The Reconciliation through the death on the Cross is therefore to be related both to God and man. Christ suffered as man for man's sin, but as God He also suffered, and yet His sufferings were not only His own, they were also the Father's. The Cross is the Altar of God's sacrifice for man unspeakably more than of man's sacrifice to God. The atonement of Christ and its moral necessity must therefore be considered in its connection with God the Father and with man the sinner. "God, no doubt, would not do justice to Himself, if He did not show His compassion to sinners, but on the other hand, He would not do justice to Himself, if He displayed His compassion for sinners in a way which made light of sin, which ignored its tragic reality, or took it for less than it is."<sup>1</sup> In the Cross we have the supreme revelation of the character of God both in His infinite love for sinners and His necessary hatred of sin. In the sacrificial sufferings of Christ we see both a suffering God no less than, much more than, a suffering man. "As the incarnate Son of God, God was in Him, and

<sup>1</sup> "The Atonement and the Modern Mind," Denney.

what He suffered God suffered, and what He achieved God achieved. His sacrifice was the act in time of the eternal holy love of God to forgive, and in forgiving, to judge sin.”<sup>1</sup> It follows, therefore, that what are sometimes described as the objective and the subjective sides of the atonement, are harmonized by the remembrance of the perfect union of God and man in the person of Jesus Christ. God in Christ is both the Judge and the Saviour of the world.

Turning from the clear, definite, and unmistakable teaching of Christ, and from His teaching subsequently interpreted by the Holy Spirit, regarding the centrality of the Cross, let us review its place in the history of the Evangelical movement. That the death of Jesus as the atoning sacrifice for the sin of the world permeated the preaching of the early Evangelicals cannot be doubted. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son” was the burden of their message. By it, as declaring the righteous anger of God against sin, they aroused the conscience. By it, as revealing the infinite love for the sinner, they appealed to the heart. By it, they proclaimed a full and free pardon to every penitent. By it, they assured every believer of a perfect and complete acceptance with God. By it, they inspired wholehearted consecration to the Lord and His service. The power of such preaching was seen in its results. As in the first days of the Church, conviction, conversion, and consecration were everywhere in evidence. “The doctrines taught proved themselves capable of arousing in great masses of men an enthusiasm for piety which was hardly surpassed in the first days of Christianity, for eradicating inveterate vice, for fixing and directing impulsive and tempestuous natures that were rapidly

<sup>1</sup> “Christian Life and Belief,” Garvie.

hastening towards the abyss.”<sup>1</sup> “They pierced through the dull, vulgar, contaminated hideousness of low and vicious life, and sent streaming in upon it the light of a higher world and a brighter law.”<sup>2</sup> They “made the selfish man self-denying, the discontented happy, the worldly spiritually minded, the drunkard sober, the sensual chaste, the liar truthful, the proud humble, the godless godly, the thriftless thrifty”.<sup>3</sup>

Nor was such preaching of the Cross confined to the founders of the movement. All who have been entitled to call themselves Evangelical have proclaimed the same truth, the centrality of the death of Jesus Christ. And if any be in doubt, let him read the lives of the later leaders, e.g. John Newton, Scott, Venn, Cecil, Romaine, Simeon, or “A History of the Evangelical Party,”<sup>4</sup> and he will be convinced that the succession has never ceased. It is, alas, true that some who called themselves “Evangelical” were not faithful to their calling, even as there are men to-day who while holding the title, are untrue to its traditions. Indeed, in nothing is the need more urgent than for a return to first principles on the part of those who profess and call themselves Evangelical. Fidelity to the great doctrine of the centrality of the atoning death of Christ is undoubtedly one of the distinguishing marks of the Evangelical Churchman, and if this be lacking, then, whatever men may call themselves or be called, they are not entitled to be classed among “Evangelicals”. But it may be urged, and not without reason, that “Low Churchmen” and some who refuse party names, as well as others who accept the title of “High Churchmen,” hold and

<sup>1</sup> “History of England in the Eighteenth Century,” Lecky.

<sup>2</sup> “History of the Four Georges,” Justin McCarthy.

<sup>3</sup> “The Evangelical Revival,” Overton.

<sup>4</sup> G. R. Balleine.

teach this doctrine with an insistence and prominence at least equal to "Evangelicals". This is true. The statement cannot be denied. But in admitting it with great thankfulness, we cannot concede the inference which sometimes follows, that there is therefore nothing to differentiate Evangelical Churchmen in this particular from their brethren of other schools of thought. There is no doubt in my mind, based upon the experience of fellowship, that many "High Churchmen" and others do teach the central character of the Lord's death, and indeed to an extent which ought to put to shame certain so-called "Evangelicals". They share with us in the belief that the atoning sacrifice for sin offered on the Cross was once and for ever completed. They are one with us in proclaiming the "finished" work on Calvary as the one and only plea for the sinner's pardon and peace. We are united in declaring that propitiation is the ground of reconciliation even as the end of reconciliation is fellowship. We are further agreed to oppose those who deny the sacrificial nature of Christ's death as an offering for sin or who minimize its significance saving only as a heroism or martyrdom. We dissent together from such teaching as would eliminate the Virgin birth, the miraculous element in the Lord's ministry, the reality of His physical resurrection as well as His reconciling death, from the region of the fundamentals. To others as well as "Evangelicals" these doctrines are alike essential to "the faith once for all delivered to the saints". Fidelity to primitive Christianity renders it impossible for us to relegate them to a position of secondary importance. They are to us primary as well as necessary. But this union between some "High Churchmen" and ourselves—mutually helpful and welcome as it is—only illustrates the nature

and extent of our common agreement. It does not involve the abolition of what is distinctive in either school of thought on other matters in which we differ. It does not imply that what is true in the Evangelical system has been absorbed by High Churchmen, and that, therefore, as a school of thought our mission has been accomplished. We hear it said, and sometimes from those in authority, that all good High Churchmen are sound Evangelicals, that they are Evangelicals and something more, and that our position has in consequence become obsolete. Such statements are as plausible as they may easily be misleading. But to those who weigh the words of a man by his preconceived opinions, or judge of their value by his knowledge of the subject, or determine their significance by the standpoint from which they are spoken, such utterances are not likely to deceive. Alluring and attractive they may be to the weak, but to the strong they are merely interesting if not amusing. Evangelical Churchmen are convinced that their witness is still wanted in the Church, even though they are glad to unite with their fellow Churchmen wherever this is possible. Both the character and necessity of this witness are in fact the main object of our study.

#### ITS RELATION TO THE HOLY COMMUNION.

An illustration of our differences from some of those with whom we agree on the doctrine of the centrality of the atonement may be given. The sacrificial death of Christ is closely related to the Holy Communion. As "the sacrament of our redemption" it is the Christ ordained "means and pledge" of (1) remembrance, (2) acceptance, and (3) fellowship.

In it we "remember the exceeding great love of our

Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ thus dying for us and the innumerable benefits which by His precious bloodshedding He hath obtained to us". It was instituted as a memorial before God and man of the sacrifice of the Cross. Not that the sacrifice is repeated, nor is it re-presented. It is remembered in the Lord's appointed way as that "whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins and are made partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven". In the Holy Communion then we *look backward* to the Cross and see on it Christ "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith by His blood" (Rom. III. 25). There we behold by faith the "finished" or completed sacrifice, "once" and "once for all" offered and accepted. "Once hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26). As the oblation was "once for all" offered, so Christ "entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. ix. 12). That the redemptive sacrifice thus consummated on the Cross is remembered before God goes without saying, but that it is being continuously presented is not provable from the New Testament. It is rather to be viewed as the "finished" oblation which is the ground and basis of our Lord's continuous intercession for us. But of this I will have more to say later on the subject of our Lord's High Priesthood.

Secondly, the Holy Communion is a "means and pledge" of acceptance—of our acceptance of Christ by faith, and of God's acceptance of us in Him. As we receive Christ who died for us, God for His sake receives us. We not only eat and drink "the bread and wine" with our mouths, but receive "the body and blood of Christ" into our hearts. Thus feeding on Him in the nature of His atoning death, He lives in us by the power

of His risen life. We are thereby accepted in His acceptance. In the Holy Communion then we also *look upward* to the Throne and see Christ on it, our "Advocate with the Father". There we behold by faith our Priest and King, sitting and pleading, resting and reigning, mediating and interceding. There we know He is "for us," our chosen Representative, and in Him we know our acceptance is assured. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ that died, yea rather who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. VIII. 33, 34).

Thirdly, the Holy Communion is the sacrament of fellowship. The physical acts of eating and drinking symbolize the spiritual appropriation by which we have fellowship with the Father in Jesus Christ. This union or fellowship is so close, intimate and vital that "if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that Holy Sacrament, then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood, then we dwell in Christ and Christ in us, we are one with Christ and Christ with us". This wondrous union with Christ involves necessarily our union with God. We are thus led on from the remembrance of the death of Christ for us and from our acceptance of that death, and through it, our acceptance by God, to the fellowship of His life. The Holy Communion then not only reminds us of the atoning sacrifice once offered on our behalf and the necessity for a personal appropriation of its merits by faith, but also conveys to us the inestimable blessings of Christ's death for us in the conscious possession of His life in us. In the Holy Communion then we *look inward*—as well as *backward and upward*—and see Christ "dwelling in our

hearts by faith". As truly as the bread and wine after reception are in our bodies, so truly is Christ Jesus in our spirits; not only then, but most surely then; not then exclusively, but especially then. In other words, the truth, so unspeakably precious, of the indwelling Christ is realizable at all times, but is realized most of all in and through the sacrament of His body and blood.

Holding these views of the blessed sacrament, it is hard to account for the opinion which prevails in some quarters that Evangelical Churchmen do not believe in the doctrine of a "real presence," excepting it be that we have not sufficiently and positively stated our faith in this particular. It may be, and probably is true, that in disavowing the mediæval dogma of transubstantiation we have not been careful to define the sense in which we believe that the Lord is really present in the Holy Communion. To us the "real presence" of Christ is not confined to the sacrament of His body and blood, even though we hold He manifests Himself in a very special manner and degree in it. The promise, "Where two or three are met together in My name, there am I in the midst," cannot be limited to even this most solemn service. It applies to every occasion when "in His name" we meet, and indeed, as originally given, there is no specific mention of the Holy Communion. But if "where two or three" come together in the communion of a common life, to realize a common fellowship in the privileges of a common worship, the Lord has promised, "there am I," no such meeting exists in which we are more certain of His "presence," and none in which He more fully "manifests" Himself to us than in the service of His own direct appointment. It follows, therefore, that as a matter of course, Evangelical Churchmen believe in the "real presence" of Christ in

the Holy Sacrament. Where we differ, is not in the truth, but in its definition; not in the fact of the Lord's presence, but its location. To us the Holy Communion or Lord's Supper is a feast upon a sacrifice combining the ideas of food, fellowship, and festival. The Host at the feast is the Living Christ. He is present to receive every guest who comes in the obedience of faith, and to impart to each the blessings symbolized in the broken bread and outpoured wine. We do not believe that the "real presence" is to be located "in or under" the form of bread and wine, much less do we believe that the bread and wine become His actual body and blood. No. In our view of the doctrine of the "real presence," which we hold to be higher and truer, more spiritual and more glorious, than that which locates the presence in the elements, the Lord is not limited to or conditioned by the bread and wine however sacred they may be, and are. He is not *in* the bread and wine, neither is He *on* the Holy Table. And yet He is present, really spiritually present, standing "in the midst" to be "the true Bread," "the true Vine," to every believing heart. As the symbols of His choice are ministered, He Himself ministers the realities they symbolize. As the faithful communicant receives the bread and wine, He imparts the virtues of His broken body and shed blood. Accepting these by faith we are "made partakers of His flesh and blood". By thus identifying ourselves with Christ in His death for us, we are afresh crucified with Him. His death becomes, by the apprehension of faith, our death. As He died for us, so we die with and in Him. And yet, even as His crucifixion issued in His resurrection, so our death with Him is followed by His life in us. The experience of dying with Him cannot be separated from the experience of

living by Him. If we can say with St. Paul—and nowhere can we say it as in the Holy Communion—"I have been crucified with Christ," we may also say with the Apostle, "nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me". It is in the feast of our redemption more than at any other time, we ought to realize the dual truth—Christ died for me—Christ lives in me. For in it, we not only commemorate His death for us, but by identifying ourselves by faith with this death, we celebrate also His risen life, and yet more, realize His life in us. "That life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Gal. II. 20).

## CHAPTER V.

### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES—III.

#### THE NECESSITY FOR THE WORK OF THE HOLY GHOST AND ITS RELATION TO HOLY BAPTISM.

THE third fundamental principle of Evangelical Churchmen is the necessity for the work of the Holy Ghost, first in regeneration and then in sanctification. Spiritual life is to us not an evolution, but a new creation; not a readjustment of the soul to God, but a regeneration by God of the soul. The need for this new birth arises out of the fact of original sin. Here we are confronted not only with certain scientific and philosophic theories, but also with the general tendencies of the times which are opposed to the Christian doctrine of sin. In the first place, there can be no doubt that the world of thought to-day is dominated by scientific methods and fascinated by scientific results. The great volume of nature with its pages of profound mysteries is being opened and interpreted before our wondering eyes. No one now fails to appreciate—least of all the Christian—the entrancing delight and inestimable value of the revelations of science. Nor does any believer in the Bible imagine for a moment that these unfoldings of creative and directive wisdom can ultimately conflict with the redemptive revelation contained within its pages. All that is needed is patience and knowledge

with a readiness to readjust the teachings both of Science and the Scriptures. In the second place, side by side with this expansion of scientific research, modern thought bears witness to a widespread development of philosophic inquiry. The quickened powers of intellect are finding in the enlarged spheres of science new and unexplored regions to be subdued, or at least related, to the things which are, or seem to be. Here again we need not fear for the future. The providence of God includes the advance both of philosophy and science. The adjustments and harmonies for which we wait will surely come. Certainly the Christian dare not yield to suspicious doubts or apprehensive fears. Thirdly, we cannot live apart from the tendencies of the times. They influence us before the dawn of consciousness. By them we are being affected day by day. To ignore them is impossible. Our duty where they are anti-Christian, is to subdue them, or, at least, see that they do not subdue us. We must either exert our freedom and power, or be prepared to enter into bondage. Once more, believers in the Bible cannot despair. The world powers have varied in the course of history but have never ceased to operate. The kingdom of God has been established amidst the kingdoms of this world, and albeit the conflict may be fierce and long, there can be but one issue to the struggle for supremacy. "The kingdoms of this world" shall become "the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ".

Meantime, however, these three movements of physical science, philosophical thought, and worldly life are tampering with some of the fundamentals of the faith. In nothing is this more evident than in regard to the teaching of the Bible on sin. Attempts are being made to prove either that sin as moral guilt does not exist, or

that it may be ignored as inevitable, and, therefore, necessary. The scientist may exclude sin from his view by concentrating his thoughts too exclusively on physical laws. The philosopher may admit sin simply as a breach in the order of man's rational nature. The worldling may blunt his moral sensibilities so as to disregard sin altogether. But it will be found that experience is on the side of Scripture, that conscience confirms the Bible, that man responds to the Christian appeal. It will further be found, that sin is a moral act, and is not, therefore, within the compass of physical science; that even if sin be a breach of the rational nature of man, this involves an outrage against the supreme reason, which is surely its source and standard; and that the moral judgment of men who have degraded their moral powers may be left out of account altogether. The Scriptural doctrine of sin will yet win supremacy. To us it is already supreme, not only because it is revealed in the Bible but also because it so evidently accords with reason and conscience, history and experience. But what is the origin and nature of sin as disclosed in the Scriptures? To this we answer, apart from secondary questions of the form in which the spirit of revelation is clothed, as follows: Man was created "in the image of God" that by the fellowship of obedience he might grow into His "likeness". The test of obedience was the law of dependence. But an alternative to freedom is necessary. The abuse of this freedom was suggested by a hostile agency. Man yielded to the temptation and fell. Sinless man became man the sinner. "Through one man's disobedience sin entered the world," and this man was the federal head of the race. Mankind is mysteriously yet undeniably one. Hence the moral taint of "one blood"

has tainted the blood of "all nations". The evil principle in human nature is propagated before our eyes. Again, the sentence of "death" is not arbitrary but natural and necessary. For what is death but separation? That man—not his body—died in the day of his disobedience, is declared in the Genesis story. This moral death or separation from conscious and abiding fellowship with God, is the inevitable result of sin. It could not be otherwise. If sin is disobedience to the Divine will, and obedience the condition of fellowship, sin involves a breach in fellowship, or, in other words, separation, that is, death. The moral condition of mankind is, therefore, abnormal. Man is everywhere alienated in heart, separated in will, darkened in understanding—spiritually dead. That the Living God, who in love created man to live, would leave man to die, is an incredible thought. Hence the rationality of redemption as revealed in Scripture. "For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one, much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One, even Jesus Christ. So, then, as through one trespass, judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous" (Rom. v. 17-19).

In this fact, or doctrine of universal depravity, as witnessed by the history of all nations, lies the ground for the necessity of a new birth, a new life, a new creation. Man "must be born again". And the genesis of this new life is not from within but "from above," not "by the will of man but of God". The

Mediator of the life is the Redeemer, even Christ, Son of God and Son of man. By His incarnation, death, and resurrection, He "restored to us everlasting life". He is "the life," and all who are united to Him live, because He "liveth in" them. In other words, those who being dead in trespasses and sin, receive Christ the Redeemer, live. "He that hath the Son hath the life." From the state of separation from God they pass into the state of fellowship with God. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word and believeth Him that sent Me hath eternal life and cometh not into judgment but hath passed out of death into life" (St. John v. 24). But the life of the Mediator is mediated to the soul by the Holy Spirit. He is "the Life giver". To be "born anew" is to be "born of the Spirit". He it is Who imparts the "gift" of life, which is Christ. Regeneration is then the work of the Holy Ghost. But as the new birth is the result of His quickening grace, so the life thus received is developed by His working in us, as we work with Him. The sanctification of the believer is the process of being conformed to the image of the perfect man by, in the first instance, the operation of the Holy Ghost, and then by our wills co-operating with Him. "I labour also striving according to His working which worketh in me mightily" (Col. i. 29). Only as we surrender ourselves to His gracious influence is sanctification a continuous process and an ever-expanding experience.

This, then, I hold, is briefly the Evangelical view of the work of the Holy Ghost, and its necessity both for regeneration and sanctification. We regard as fundamental the mystery of human depravity and the correlative doctrine of the Divine Spirit's mission in the world. Both doctrines must, however, be treated with

great reserve. To fully comprehend either is impossible. They baffle perfect analysis and defy complete definition. Dogmatism in matters of detail is an effort to compass what is not revealed. It is so easy to ask questions on either, for which no answer can be given. We do well, therefore, to respect the studiously guarded expressions of our Church as set forth in Article IX. At the same time while reverently receiving the revelation of the Bible and the definition of the Church, we may thankfully recognize the agreement of both with the facts of history and experience, and at the same time faithfully proclaim in season and out of season the dual truth. That there is an urgent need for such an enforcement both of the sin of man and the work of the Holy Ghost is evident from what we have already seen. Even in the Church there are signs of a modern Pelagianism not far removed from the ancient heresy, while a "new theology" has been resurrected and modernized which makes light of sin, if indeed it does not seek to explain it away altogether. Again, efforts are being made in some scientific circles to deny the doctrine of sin as taught in the Scriptures by affirming evil to be simply a necessary experience in the evolution of human life, or a survival of the animal instinct in man which is slowly working itself out. Sinning man, according to some scientists, is to be pitied and not blamed. There is in sin no real guilt, only weakness and imperfection. With growth and added strength it will ultimately cease and nowhere be found. "As a matter of fact, the higher man of to-day is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment."<sup>1</sup> In face of these hostile theories and tendencies Churchmen of every school of thought are summoned

<sup>1</sup> "Man and the Universe," Lodge.

to take the field in defence of the truth of the Bible and the faith of the Church. Nor can Evangelicals seek other than to be in the front line of attack. We must be more insistent and dogmatic as to the root nature of sin and its penal consequences. While varying in our interpretation of the Genesis story, we must recognize the truth underlying the form in which it is given. Sin must be traced to the will of man in rebellion against the law of God, and as such involving guilt and deserving punishment. We must teach with greater clearness and power that "the wages of sin is death," or, in other words, separation from God; that while the Divine love for the sinner is infinite and unchanging, the destiny of man is in his own hands; and that as long as he continues in a state of rebellion, pardon and peace are impossible. Side by side with this insistence upon the nature and consequences of sin, we must preach with greater force and fulness the glory of redeeming grace, in the God-sent Son and Saviour, Who in His incarnate life died for man's sin, and by dying destroyed death. Further, in our preaching we must rely with greater faith in the Holy Spirit, Whose mission it is to "convict of sin" and then to reveal the Saviour, thus bringing within the reach of all "the free gift of God" which "is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord".

Regeneration is then, as we have seen, the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart by which man is brought into union with Christ "Who is our life". The life is Christ. The Life giver is the Holy Spirit. Regeneration is the initial act of grace by which we are born into a state of salvation. But salvation includes more than deliverance from the wrath of God due to sin. It is the possession of a new life which involves growth. As the babe is born to grow, so the regenerated soul lives to

develop. In both cases the life expands and unfolds as it is nourished within and cultured without. This process of growth or development in the spiritual life is sanctification. The secret efficacy of this process is due to the gracious inworking of the Holy Spirit by which, through the action of our own wills, Christ is more and more formed in us. But the inward process has necessarily an outward expression, and sanctification is also the indwelling Christ more and more manifesting Himself in and through our mortal bodies. Thus sanctification which springs from regeneration and involves justification—the state of perfect acceptance in which we are accounted righteous before God because of the merits of Christ—issues in service by the consecration of all life's powers to God. Justification is due to the work of Christ *for* us. Sanctification is due to the work of the Spirit *in* us. The former is immediate and perfect. The latter is imperfect and progressive. In the one we “have been saved” from the condemning power of the law. In the other we are “being saved” from the enslaving power of sin. Justification is concerned with our standing before God. Sanctification is concerned with our living for God. The former refers to our state, the latter to our life. All who are justified are being sanctified. The sanctification of the justified is, in a word, the gradual growth of the new life through Christ in conformity with the will of God, by the Holy Spirit.

In thus restating the principles of Evangelical Churchmen in respect to sin and the Holy Ghost, I am not unmindful that whilst attacks are being made upon them from without, and weakness is being shown from within, the Church, Evangelicals are not standing alone in fidelity to revealed truth. For the most part “Low Churchmen” agree with us and many “High Church-

men " are also to be found on the same side. For this united testimony we cannot be too thankful. Indeed the whole Church is under a deep obligation for the ability and persistency with which these doctrines have been defended by certain writers of the High Church party. They are one with us and we with them, in this defence. Our differences lie, as before stated, not so much with the truth which we believe, as in the form in which we interpret it. We agree absolutely in our faith in the person and power of the Holy Spirit and in the necessity for His regenerating and sanctifying work. We differ in some respects in our conception of His Divine operations. A reference to the Sacrament of Baptism will illustrate this.

#### ITS RELATION TO HOLY BAPTISM.

Evangelicals are sometimes charged with sharing the views of those who depreciate the Sacraments—a charge which is the result of either ignorance of facts, or confusion of terms. We repudiate any suggestion that we despise, belittle or underestimate either Baptism or the Holy Communion. On the other hand, we accept without any reservation the doctrine of the Church as defined in the Articles and Catechism, and seek only to relate our view of the Sacraments to the teaching of the New Testament. The position in which we find them in the Apostolic Church is the place in which we endeavour to set them in our system. With us both are "generally necessary to salvation," and in each the two sides of the Sacrament are complementary. Where we differ from some of our brethren is in the relation between "the outward and visible sign" and "the inward and spiritual grace". We regard the blessings of the Sacrament as conditioned

by faith and certainly emphasize more its paramount necessity. We are therefore farthest removed from the "ex opere operato" or the extreme Sacramental view which is held by some. To us Baptism is the Sacrament of regeneration even as the Holy Communion is the Sacrament of redemption. In other words, it is the normal "means" whereby spiritual life is given or sealed to the faithful. In the case of children of believing parents, the life is given, and with adults who believe, it is sealed. The Lord who "commanded the children to be brought to Him," who "took them up in His arms and blessed them," is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever". Even babes therefore may be recipients of His blessing, and none are too young to be admitted into His Church. Again, the Sacraments of the Lord are not empty rites or formal ceremonies. They are "sure witnesses" and "effectual signs of grace"—according to the Articles. They are "means whereby we receive the same" and "pledges to assure us thereof"—according to the Catechism. But it must be remembered that the administration of both Sacraments presupposes faith. They are intended for Christian believers only. Baptism, even more than the Holy Communion, e.g., is frequently regarded as a kind of spiritual charm, while rightly understood it involves, and even demands, conditions or promises which can only be fulfilled by the faithful. And although we believe that the Lord "for His part will most surely keep and perform" the promises made and sealed to us, we must see to it that the corresponding conditions on our side of the Covenant are duly observed. On this account Evangelical Churchmen emphasize more than do their brethren the covenant aspect of the Sacrament. While recognizing the reality of the regenerating grace on the

divine side, we lay proportionate stress on the necessity for the co-operating will on the human side. God will always give, if man will only receive, but for the possession of any gift reception is necessary. In this connection we seek to press home the responsibility of sponsorship. The child is baptized on certain prerequisite conditions. These conditions are accepted by the sponsors on behalf of the child, and yet how often are they nullified by neglect! Surely the fact of sponsorship, in addition to parental responsibility, signifies that the child is baptized not so much because of physical relationship as on the grounds of spiritual conditions.

Further, while encouraging faith in the parents of the child to be baptized, and employing in the service the language of assurance, we recognize that the operations of the Spirit are not limited to time and place, and that as "the wind bloweth where it listeth, so is everyone that is born of the Spirit". We pray in faith for the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, nor are we wrong in believing, in the absence of proofs to the contrary, that our prayers have been answered. We cannot, however, forget that some who have been baptized show no signs of spiritual life, even as Simon Magus, though he was baptized, had "neither part nor lot" in the Kingdom because his "heart was not right in the sight of God". It may be in such cases, that we must regard the grace of Baptism as "sealed," and made over, to the recipient for faith's future use. At any rate, we know that it is possible for a formal donation of a gift to be made without any subsequent and personal appropriation of it, in consequence of which the gift lapses by neglect.

"The true remedy against misunderstanding is not to be sought in deducting anything from the true and scriptural doctrine of the Sacraments, but in showing

their relationship to the gospel of Christ, in enforcing their subservience in doctrine and efficacy to the doctrines of grace and the grace of the doctrines.”<sup>1</sup> And this is precisely what Central Churchmen do. They appeal to those who being baptized in infancy exhibit no signs of renewal, to come to the Saviour who is already theirs, to whom they were in fact given in Baptism, and claim the cleansing which was then covenanted to them, which although signed and sealed by His authority on their behalf, they have hitherto failed through lack of faith to possess.

As with Baptism so also with its natural complement, Confirmation, we lay the greatest possible stress on the side of individual responsibility, the paramount necessity for a personal surrender to Christ, with all that it involves in the way of repentance, faith, and obedience. Confirmation, in other words, must be viewed both in its active and passive aspects. The baptized person first “confirms” and is then “confirmed”. The condition of the latter is the former. Not until he “confirms” or ratifies the promises made on his behalf in his baptism is he “confirmed” or strengthened by the seven-fold gift of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, we understand “the years of discretion” to mean the possibility of an intelligent grasp of the faith and a personal surrender to the Lord, on the part of those to be confirmed. While holding therefore that no hard and fast rule of age can be adopted, we do not encourage children of tender years or of undeveloped intelligence to be confirmed. The service of admission to the full privileges of Church membership is too solemn and weighty a matter for any but for those who thoroughly understand what it expresses and involves.

<sup>1</sup> “The Doctrine of the Sacraments,” Dimook.

## CHAPTER VI.

### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES—IV.

#### THE LIBERTY OF ACCESS TO GOD AND ITS RELATION TO THE MINISTRY.

THE liberty of man's access to God through Jesus Christ is the fourth fundamental principle of Evangelical or Central Churchmanship. We hold and teach that this access is free and unfettered. It is not confined to time or place. It is not conditioned by the priest, nor is it limited to the Sacrament. At all times and in all places, all may draw nigh to God and hold fellowship with Him, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the house or the school, the office or the workshop, amid the bustle of business or the silence of hillside, as well as in ordered service and holy sacrament, we may come, without let or hindrance, into the sanctuary of the Divine Presence.

Where'er we seek Thee, Thou art found,  
And every place is hallowed ground.

All that is necessary is that we come by the right way and in the true spirit. "I am the way . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." "For through Him we have one access in one Spirit unto the Father." The "way" is always open. The "access" is never inaccessible. All may come to the Father, and always come, and come in all places, if only they come by "the

new and living way ” and “ in the one Spirit ”. This doctrine of free access, of unfettered freedom, of unrestricted liberty in our approach to God is the necessary result of man’s restored fellowship with the Divine love in and through Christ our one and only Mediator. It is the natural expression of the spiritual life, the right and privilege of every child of God.

Two conclusions issue from this doctrine. In the first place, we must exclude from our minds any thought of necessary intervention or mediation in others, e.g. angels, or saints, or priests. These may be helps in the way, but they are not the way itself. Ministers of God, they may be. Mediators with God, they are not. They are sent by Him to render us service, but we must never interpose the servant between us and God. There is one and only one way to the Father, one and only one Mediator between God and man.

Secondly, we cannot but believe that this divinely-appointed “ Way,” the God-given “ Mediator,” is equally, always, and in all places, accessible to all men. Jesus Christ is unconditioned by temporal or material arrangements. “ Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden ” are words addressed to all who, seeking rest and relief, find them not—as indeed apart from Christ they can nowhere be found. No restriction and no condition can be imposed by any Church or man. The invitation “ Come unto Me ” is to a direct and immediate approach. The promise “ I will give you rest ” is free and unfettered. It follows, therefore, that any one may come, at any time and in any place, to Christ, and through Him to the Father. The “ Way ” is always open and open to all. The “ Mediator ” is equally and unchangeably accessible to every man.

This direct and immediate access to God that we may

have complete and uninterrupted fellowship with Him is the final and ultimate purpose of our redemption. If it be true in the natural life that "in Him we live and move and have our being," how much more is it true of the spiritual life? A constant and abiding communion with God is the Christian ideal, and, like all true ideals, it is one which is increasingly realizable. To know and feel that Jesus Christ is "with us always," that we "walk in the Spirit," that at all times we have "access unto the Father," is to live indeed the Christian life. Anything less than this falls short of the possibilities not only involved in the redemptive work of Christ but also revealed throughout the pages of the New Testament. We may, however, for purposes of illustration, particularize by referring to one book. The Epistle to the Hebrews has, as its main theme, the perfection and permanency of the new Covenant as contrasted with the incompleteness and transitoriness of the old. Both Covenants, it is true, are from God and for man, and in these two respects they are alike. But the old is preparatory, and, therefore, transitory, while the new is complete and final. The types and shadows of the former were simply predictive and illustrative of the latter. With the incoming of the new Covenant, the old was for ever abolished or rather fulfilled. The argument of the writer gathers around, and in, the person and function of the High Priest, especially on the great Day of Atonement, when the whole ritual of the old covenant was, so to speak, epitomized. The Tabernacle in the midst of the people was the visible expression of a spiritual truth, that God was in their midst, to "meet" with them and they with Him. But only through the priesthood and the sacrifices was this meeting or fellowship between God and the people

possible. In other words, the priest was required for the sacrifice and the sacrifice for the people. Moreover, it will be remembered that in the Tabernacle a veil separated the holy place from the holy of holies in which stood the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat—the promised place of meeting. Through this veil none might enter save the High Priest, and he only once a year, and then only after ceremonial cleansings and sacrifices. All these things were, however, but types and shadows of the new and better Covenant in which the antitype and substance appeared. Tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices have their spiritual counterpart in Jesus Christ. The Tabernacle of the new Covenant, together with its High Priest and sacrifices, are all from heaven, and are “heavenly,” that is, spiritual. By them alone, therefore, is man brought into fellowship with the realities of the invisible world. “Christ having come a High Priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect Tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption” (Heb. ix. 11-12). Long as we might linger in reverent worship over the person and work of the Mediator of the new Covenant, we must confine ourselves to three aspects which bear upon the subject of our liberty of access to the presence and fellowship of God.

(1) *The High Priesthood of Christ.*—The whole argument of the Epistle concentrates in the conception of the Son of God as the great antitype of the Aaronic order of priests and indeed of all priesthoods. He is the “priest after the order of Melchizedek”. In other words, our Lord fulfils in Himself and His work, not

only all that was typified in the Levitical order of priests, but in the yet higher order of Melchizedek. One main point to the writer in this higher order is expressed in the words, "Melchizedek—abideth a priest continually". There was with him no succession as with Aaron. "After" this "order" Christ is priest. His priesthood is eternal. He is the priest "for ever". Eternity and finality express His priestly office. Our High Priest "hath been made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Heb. VII. 16). His priesthood springs from the inherent "power" of an "endless" or rather "indissoluble" life. It is, therefore, not subject to change or succession. It is unchanging and eternal. From this it follows, there is no order of priests under the new Covenant as there was under the old. Priesthood assumes indeed a very different aspect in the Christian system. The one unchanging Priest excludes the possibility of an order or succession of mediating priests. "They indeed have been made priests, many in number, because that by death they are hindered from continuing, but He because He abideth for ever, hath His priesthood unchangeable" (Heb. VII. 23, 24). A sacerdotal order, that is an order of priests acting for Christ on behalf of men, in necessary mediation, is in plain contradiction to the teaching of the New Testament. There is one and only one Mediator. There is one and only one Priest. But if the permanency and finality of Christ's priesthood exclude a mediating priesthood as a distinct class or separate order, it involves the priestly character of His Church as His body. The Christian society is a "royal priesthood," "a holy priesthood," and all its members—whether clerical or lay—are alike "priests unto God". There is, in essence, whatever there may

be in office, no difference between the priesthood of the clergy and the priesthood of the laity. Being members together of His priestly "Body," they all alike partake of the one priesthood of Him who is "the Head".

(2) *The Sacrificial Function of Christ.*—As all priesthoods were fulfilled in the person of our High Priest, so all sacrifices culminated in the great oblation of Calvary. There, as we have already seen, the offering on behalf of the world's sin was "full, complete, and perfect". "Once," "once for all," is the term which is again and again repeated in this Epistle to emphasize the finality of the sacrifice of the Cross. There is and can be no addition to and no repetition of, that sacrifice. "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14). "There is no more offering for sin" (Heb. x. 18). And yet although the sacrifice for sin was "finished"—completed and perfected—there are "spiritual sacrifices" which as priests we are called to offer. This indeed is our highest privilege as it is our bounden duty. "Through Him let us offer a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips which make confession to His name. But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. XIII. 15). "Our sacrifice, our participation in Him involves more than suffering for His sake: it is also an expression of thanksgiving, of praise to God, and of service to man, for Christ has made possible for us this side also of sacrificial service."<sup>1</sup> So again, we are called "to be a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter II. 2). Only indeed as our sacrifices are offered

<sup>1</sup> "Epistle to the Hebrews," Westcott.

“through Him” who is our High Priest are they acceptable to God.

(3) *The “Living Way” to the Mercy Seat.*—We have already reminded ourselves of the veil which intervened between the holy place and the holy of holies in the Tabernacle. “By that veil the Holy Ghost thus signified that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest, while as yet the first Tabernacle had its standing. The High Priest of shadow ministered once a year on the other side of the veil. The true High Priest having made his way through the veil, that is to say his flesh, ministers behind no veil. The holy of holies is now thrown quite open, and we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, not once a year but every day.”<sup>1</sup> In this connection the striking event recorded by the Evangelist is full of spiritual significance: “Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up His Spirit. And behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom” (St. Matt. xxvii. 50, 51). The rending of the veil, let it be noted, took place at the moment of the Lord’s death, at the time of the offering of the great oblation, with which it stands causatively related. By this symbolism we see the truth illustrated that the way to the mercy seat is now and for ever open to all. There is no sacrifice for sin to be offered. No order of priests is necessary to our approach. The sacrifice has been presented and accepted. The veil has been rent from the top to the bottom. Every believer is therefore a priest with the inalienable right of direct access. “Having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way through the veil,

<sup>1</sup> “The Sacerdotium of Christ,” Dimock.

that is to say, His flesh; and having a great High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our body washed with pure water; let us hold fast the confession of our hope, that it waver not; for He is faithful that promised; and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh" (Heb. x. 19-25). In these practical exhortations we find the thought of the universal priesthood of Christians suggested in such terms as "draw near"—the LXX expression of the priest's approach to God, and "hearts sprinkled," "body washed"—probable references to the cleansing rites of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. We find also that the appeal for "faith," "hope," and "love" is based on the right, duty and privilege of direct, immediate, and uninterrupted access to the mercy seat of the Most High.

Such then is the inalienable possession of every true believer, that at all times and in all places he may "draw near with boldness"—with every confidence—"unto the throne of grace" that he "may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. iv. 16), and "offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. ii. 5).

#### ITS RELATION TO THE MINISTRY.

That this evangelical doctrine of the free and unrestricted liberty of the soul's access to God through Jesus Christ is related to the ministry is, of course, obvious. It is, therefore, necessary that we should define the relation between the clergy and the Church in

general. In the first place, we do not, of course, ignore the sanctity of the ministerial calling nor despise the dignity of its office. Far otherwise—we regard the ministry as a divinely-ordered institution. Even as our Lord called out from the general body of disciples some “whom He named Apostles” that they might first be “with Him” and that He might then “send them forth” to minister in His name, so now, men of His choice are called and commissioned by Him to be His representatives in the order and work of His Church. The practice of the Apostles proves that they regarded the action of the Lord as the norm for their conduct of the Church. Men were separated and set apart by them for “prayer and the ministry of the word”. The New Testament leaves us in no doubt, that by the authority of the Lord Himself, acting through the medium of the Church, men were ordained to be His accredited representatives and that without this setting apart they could not be so regarded. Again, we believe that “from the Apostles’ time there have been three orders of ministers—bishops, priests, and deacons,” and that “no man may presume to execute any of them except he be first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same, and also by public prayer and with imposition of hands be approved and admitted thereto by lawful authority”. We believe, therefore, in the threefold ministry as a historical fact, and therefore as in accord with the Divine purpose, but we regard it simply as an authorized principle of order, not as a necessary vehicle of grace. We believe that the constitution of the Church at the close of the first century—however it was reached, by direct injunction or gradual evolution—was in harmony with the mind of

Christ, and that episcopacy is the surest guarantee of its continuity and order. But with the history of Christendom before us, we cannot condition "covenanted grace" to an episcopal ministry, nor do otherwise than recognize most thankfully the spiritual vitality of non-episcopal Churches. We need to remember that the schisms of the sixteenth century were due mainly to the action of the Papacy in refusing to reform widespread and admitted abuses. Certainly the last thing Luther desired was to separate from the historic Church. In like manner, the rise of independent bodies of Christians in our own country was doubtless the result of prejudice and wilfulness on the part of the Leaders of separation, but it was also the outcome of the Church's unspirituality and blindness.<sup>1</sup> To apportion the blame for existing divisions is, for us, impossible. God alone is the Judge. While accepting, therefore, *ex animo* the order of the Church of England as scriptural and primitive, we feel bound also to recognize that truth is greater than order, and that if one or other must be sacrificed, it is order, and not truth, that must go. On the Continent, the Reformers were compelled to face the dread alternative. In England, thank God, it was otherwise. The Church claimed her independence of Rome, and without any change in her organic life, without any break in her historic past, reformed herself by the standards of Scripture and primitive usage. We do well, therefore, to judge lightly, if at all, those movements which in the sixteenth century and later, separated, or were separated, from the ancient Church of this or other lands. Further, whatever may be our opinions of the threefold order of the ministry, or how-

<sup>1</sup> Reference may be made to "Church and Dissent" in my "Problems of Church Work".

ever we may regard it as at least historically authoritative, we cannot but admit the restraint with which our Church views the subject both in the Ordinal and in the Articles. "In the Preface, and in the cognate statement of the Thirty-sixth Article, nothing is said to the effect that the very existence of the Christian Church is suspended on the threefold order, so that this order can alone guarantee the working of the covenant of grace. And we have ample evidence that the framers of the Articles and of the Preface meant so to restrain their statement. Positively they believed wholly in the primæval and catholic authenticity of the triple system. But they had learned great things from Scripture, and from the vast contemporary history around them. And they forebore to exaggerate a reverential adherence to the ideal, into a condemnation of every other type under any other conditions. The same balance of decision and restraint appears in the Ordinal itself."<sup>1</sup> For my own part, I cannot find in the Prayer Book any justification for confining covenanted grace to one ecclesiastical system, and while I believe that it was the purpose of Christ that His Church should be one in organization, as it is in life, I recognize that this purpose has been temporarily frustrated by sin, and that His seal has been put upon the principle that the gospel of Christ is of greater importance than the order of the Church. If the Church of England is faithful both to the apostolic gospel and the primitive order, let us thank God, but not condemn others. Rather let us confess that all who "hold the Head" are members of His mystical body, and all who are baptized into His name are members of the catholic Church. The day of corporate reunion may be far distant, and yet on the other

<sup>1</sup>"The Ministry of the Church of England," Bishop Moule.

hand, it may be nearer than we suppose. In the meantime while we dare not betray our convictions nor surrender our inheritance, we can all work and pray for the coming of the time when our Lord's prayer for His own will be fulfilled: "that they all may be one".

We have already noted that the Church or Christian Society is, as a whole, apart from the divisions of clergy and laity, a priestly body—"a holy priesthood"—"a royal priesthood". And we may now turn to consider how we ought to relate the office of the ministry to the general membership of the Church. The question is important, but not so difficult as might be supposed from the controversy which rages around it. If only we can discuss it calmly, apart from passion or prejudice, we ought at least to obtain some light upon it, even if we still fail to see "eye to eye" with our brethren, or they with us. In the first place, we must recognize that nowhere in the New Testament is the ministry referred to in sacerdotal terms. The ministers of the Church are called by many names, but the word priest (*ιερεύς*) is never used. This fact is very significant. The term was at least open to misunderstanding, and if for no other reason was not employed by the Apostles. To us, the omission is explained by our belief that the Christian ministry is not in any sense a succession of the Temple Priesthood. In other words, it is not a sacerdotal order as were the priests in the Jewish system. Again, not only is the word nowhere used in the New Testament, it is not found in the Christian writings before the close of the second century. "Whereas the conception of the Christian ministry and pastorate of souls dates behind our present period (the second century) into the immemorial past, it is only at the beginning of our period that the title of priesthood

began to be applied to it. Irenæus and Clement do not speak of Christian ministers as priests, while Tertullian and Origen do, so that it is only towards the end of the second century that sacerdotal terms begin to be applied to the clergy.”<sup>1</sup> And yet, even though the word itself is not warranted by Scripture or primitive use, and is, as the history of the Church proves, liable to serious abuse, there is a sense in which it may be legitimately employed. For if the Church be a priestly body—which no one denies—then the clergy, as its accredited representatives, must hold a priestly office. If all believers are “priests unto God,” then must the clergy be also priests. And they are. But in what sense? Are they a sacerdotal order distinct and separate from the sacerdotalism of the whole Church? And the answer is No. Are they, then, priests in that, in some way, they are necessary to mediate between the soul and God? Again the answer is No. Is grace, then, in any way conditioned by their office? Once more we must reply in the negative. Then in what sense are they priests? In the sense that they are chosen to be in the order of public worship and pastoral work the representatives of the priesthood of the entire Church, an office which they hold without infringing upon any of the rights and privileges which belong to the priestly laity.

For the due performance of the priestly functions of the whole body we recognize that duly qualified men must be appointed. Take e.g. the order of common prayer or corporate worship. All who engage in it cannot at all times minister in the same way. Some must be selected to speak and act on behalf of all. “The priest,” therefore, offers prayers as the spokesman of the whole body of worshippers. He is not the only

<sup>1</sup> “The Church and the Ministry,” Bishop Gore.

priest, but is the priest appointed to represent the priesthood of the Church. Even as the time-honoured title "parson" expresses the idea that the clergy impersonate the Church in the parish, so the term "priest" denotes the official who, for certain ministerial functions, impersonates the priesthood of the whole body. But as the "parson" is not the only "person," so the "priest" is not the only priest. "For communicating instruction and for preserving public order, for conducting public worship and dispensing social charities, it became necessary to appoint special officers. But the priestly functions and privileges of the Christian people were never regarded as being transferred or even delegated to these officers."<sup>1</sup> The Clergy of the Church of England are therefore priests only in this ecclesiastical sense. They are not an order of priests distinct and detached from the members of the priestly body, even though they have been called and commissioned by Christ to the office they hold. They do not even, according to the Church of England, really possess the priestly title. It is true that in the Prayer book the term "priest" constantly occurs, but as is well known, there is but one English word for two Greek words—*ιερεύς* and *πρεσβύτερος*, the latter being the original of the Prayer Book. "Priest" is simply the abbreviated form of "Presbyter" or "Elder". In this the Church of England follows the New Testament both in not assigning the title *ιερεύς* or *sacerdos* to the ministry, and in using the term *πρεσβύτερος* or *presbyterus* to define it. We need not, however, hesitate to use the term as it is used in the Prayer Book, or even in its sacerdotal sense, providing we understand its meaning and limitations. The "Priest" is the "Presbyter"

<sup>1</sup> "Philippians," Bishop Lightfoot.

who for certain functions acts for and with the priesthood of the laity. He does not stand apart as if he belonged to a separate order of priests. He simply shares in and with the priestly society, the Church, of which he is one of the appointed officers. His functions are partly prophetic, partly pastoral, partly administrative, and partly priestly. In respect to the last he is ordained to lead the people in common worship culminating in the Holy Communion, the blessed Sacrament of an abiding fellowship, and although such worship includes the offering up of "spiritual sacrifices," as e.g. "our alms and oblations," "our souls and bodies," "our praises and thanksgivings," yet even these are not presented by the priest *for* or *instead of* the people but *with* them. No sacrifice for sin is included in such offerings, for the simple reason that the one sacrifice has been once offered and can never be repeated nor re-presented. Some while admitting there can be no repetition, believe, that in the Holy Communion, there is a re-presentation of the one sacrifice for sin once offered on the Cross, and that the Clergy by virtue of their office as Celebrants, in thus re-presenting the sacrifice are therefore sacrificing Priests. It is further urged that in so doing, the Church on earth is acting in concert with her Lord in Heaven, Who is even now presenting before the Father the sacrifice He made on Calvary. To this I would reply two things. Firstly—Scholars<sup>1</sup> are by no means agreed that Scripture warrants the idea that our great High Priest is now presenting the sacrifice. There are many of acknowledged ability who believe the New Testament teaches that the sacrifice was "once for all" offered on the Cross and that it was *then* and *there* "once for all" accepted. Others hold that having offered Himself as a sin-offering for the world, the High Priest

<sup>1</sup> See e.g., "Epistle to the Hebrews," Westcott.

passed through the heavens, *there* and *then*, to present to the Father the “finished” sacrifice. In either case, the Lord, as One who had completed His offering—when he had made purification of sins—sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. “Heaven is not a place of sacrifice and our Lord is no longer a sacrificing priest. He has *offered one sacrifice for sins for ever*. But His presence in the Holiest is a perpetual and effective presentation before God of the sacrifice once offered which is no less needful for our acceptance than the actual death upon the Cross. He has indeed *somewhat to offer* in His heavenly priesthood, for He offers Himself as representing to God man reconciled and as claiming for man the right of access to the Divine presence. He Himself, as He sits on the Throne in the perfected and glorified manhood which has been obedient unto death, is the living propitiation for our sins and the standing guarantee of acceptance to all that draw near unto God through Him.”<sup>1</sup> Secondly—If this view be accepted and the sacrifice was once for all presented, and accepted by the Father, it does not follow that “pleading” or “re-presenting” the sacrifice already offered and accepted, constitutes the order of Clergy a sacrificing priesthood. “The burning question as to the Christian ministry is precisely this: Is the Christian minister a sacrificing priest or is he not? If he were merely called ‘priest’ in the etymological sense of ‘presbyter,’ there would be no controversy. It is when the functions of the priest include sacrifice that controversy begins.”<sup>2</sup> It is important that we should differentiate between offering a sacrifice and pleading a sacrifice already offered. The former is essentially the function of

<sup>1</sup> “The Ascended Christ,” Swete.

<sup>2</sup> “The Conception of Priesthood,” Sanday.

priesthood, while the latter is not. "To sacrifice and to plead or 'present' a sacrifice ceremonially are really distinct things . . . in a strict use of terms those who do but plead or present the Sacrifice of Another are not entitled to speak, or be spoken of, as though the act of sacrifice were their own."<sup>1</sup> If, in the Holy Communion, we simply plead before God the merits of the *one* sacrifice for sin *once for all* offered, we are realizing its *first*—but not its only—object. "Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained? For the continual *remembrance* of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby." "What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?" "A thankful *remembrance* of Christ's death." "To the end that we should always *remember* . . . He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of His love and for a continual *remembrance* of His death." Again, although the Church lays stress on *our* remembrance of the perfect sacrifice, yet we may surely also be "the Lord's remembrancers" and regard the Holy Communion as a memorial before God in which we plead the merits and mediation of Christ.<sup>2</sup> Why not? In every prayer and thanksgiving we do the same thing. It is only when the Sacrament is defined as a re-presentation of the oblation of Calvary that we begin to divide in opinion. To me, the completeness and perfection of the Lord's sacrifice for the sin of the world excludes any thought of its continuous offering. It was "finished" in the sense that it reached its full end, it fulfilled its true purpose. "By His one offering, once made and finished, He has done all that could be supposed to be possible by any imagined 'continuous sacrifice'. There is no

<sup>1</sup> "The Conception of Priesthood," Sanday.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1 John ii. 2; Heb. vii. 25; Acts x. 31.

other offering and no other way of offering Himself for the belief of which there is any warrant of God's word." <sup>1</sup> It is unnecessary to refer to the teaching of the Roman Church which declares the Mass to be "*verum ac proprium sacrificium*" and "*vere propitiatorium*," for the simple reason that such teaching is unprimitive, uncatholic, and unscriptural. But I repeat, even if the Holy Communion is regarded as a re-presentation of the one sacrifice, a reflection of the continuous offering in Heaven, to re-present the accepted sacrifice is in no sense a priestly function. "Those who present the Sacrifice of Another are not entitled to speak, or be spoken of, as though the act of sacrifice was their own." Even on these grounds, the clergy are not a sacerdotal order of priests ordained to offer vicariously or otherwise, any sacrifice which has reference to sin.

The case has been clearly stated by a Master in Evangelical Israel. "Christian ministers may indeed in a sense and a sound sense be spoken of as *προσφέροντες τὰ δῶρα*. They may even be said to offer, in some sense (a sense defensible but hardly *now* commendable), the sacrifice of their redemption, but it is only as offering to the Divine view the finished work of the Redeemer, pleading by the symbols ordained for a remembrance, the once sacrificially offered—never to be offered again in heaven or on earth—the one sacrifice, offered and accepted on the cross for the sins of the whole world. It can hardly, indeed, be maintained that there is scriptural warrant for regarding such an offering as entering into the purpose of the ordinance, but it seems impossible to separate such an offering, in such a sense, from the faithful reception of the Holy Mysteries of the Sacrificed Body and Blood of Christ. This, however,

<sup>1</sup> "The True Doctrine of the Eucharist," Vogan.

is an offering which is not an oblation at all in a sacrificial sense but only a pleading in an ordinance—an offering in which the officiating minister can obviously do nothing more than act as the mouthpiece of the redeemed people of God. It is an offering which throws back faith's view altogether from itself to the one oblation once offered, bids it contemplate no act of a human priest in an empty chancel but gaze with thankful adoration on the uplifted Saviour bearing our cross, taking away our sins, making by His one perfect oblation a full end of sacrifice and offering, rending the veil of separation and throwing open for ever the entrance of the holiest.”<sup>1</sup> As I understand the teaching of the New Testament, the Lord as our High Priest offered Himself the sacrifice for the sin of the world. This sacrifice was “full, complete, and perfect” and was “once for all” offered. Having “finished” the sacrificial part of His priestly work, He “through His own blood, entered in once for all, into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption” (Heb. ix. 12). There He having “made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. i. 3), and on the ground of His completed atonement, “He ever liveth to make intercession for us”. The Priest is on the Throne. He is not now presenting the sacrifice—that has been presented and accepted—but is ever pleading for us in its abiding efficacy. The perfection of His sacrifice forbids the thought of its being repeated or even of its continuous offering. “By one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. x. 14).

We cannot, therefore, regard the clergy as being in any sense *necessary* for the soul's approach to Christ, nor as *indispensable* for forgiveness of sins or fellowship

<sup>1</sup> “The Sacerdotium of Christ,” Dimock.

with God. They have their office, and with it their function, but neither the one nor the other involve any official mediatorial or vicarious rights. They may not claim to intervene between man and his Maker, nor are they in anywise requisite to the believer's intercourse with his Lord. Even the Sacraments the Lord ordained are committed to their administration only as the official representatives of the Church, and one of the two may be ministered, as we know, in emergency by the laity. The one and only necessary Mediator is Jesus Christ. He is the sole intervening Priest between God and man, and His priesthood is perfect and final, unique and permanent. Through Him and in Him, forgiveness and fellowship are realized. The forgiveness is complete and the fellowship abiding. There is no room, therefore, for further mediation. Christ Jesus is "a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek". All who come unto God by Him—and all may come—are sure, at all times and in all places, of a free and unrestricted access and acceptance.

#### ITS RELATION TO CONFESSION.

An illustration of the divergence of doctrine on the functions of the ministry between ourselves and others may be cited in reference to confession.<sup>1</sup> It is our conviction, based on the teaching of the New Testament, and endorsed by the letter and spirit of the Prayer Book, that the normal method by which the sinner obtains pardon and peace is by direct and immediate confession to the Lord, and by receiving from Him, directly and immediately, forgiveness and absolution. This, I repeat, is the rule both of the Bible and the

<sup>1</sup> *N.B.*—For a fuller treatment of the subject, see my manual on "Confession, according to the Bible and Prayer Book".

Church. But we recognize that there are exceptional cases in which the mercy and grace sought are not always found, or at least not fully realized, and that in such cases it is the duty of the penitent to seek for pastoral help and guidance from some "learned and discreet minister". In the carefully chosen words of the Prayer Book—to which we give our entire allegiance—"if there be any of you who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein but requireth further comfort or counsel let him come to me or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness". A fair and just interpretation of these words cannot, I think, make the Church responsible for the teaching that confession to or before a priest is either required for forgiveness or necessary to its assurance, or that the priestly office is essential to mediate between the soul and God. The words of the Prayer Book do not recognize confession to a priest as a condition of pardon or peace, but only, in the last resource—not the first—advisable, and then only, as an exception—not the rule. In other words, penitents who having exhausted the ordinary and normal means for obtaining a quiet conscience, are exhorted to avail themselves of the perfectly natural method of pastoral assistance. For such assistance a confession is, of course, necessary. But the Prayer Book gives no warrant for the teaching that confession should be habitual, or that it is imperative, least of all, that it should include all sins. Any attempt to require a detailed confession, whether suggested by a form of questions or otherwise, either before Confirmation or Holy Communion, is contrary to

the Church's rule and ought to be resisted. There is no justification in the New Testament or the Prayer Book for the effort to revive the confessional as an integral part of the Church's sacramental system, or for the doctrine that without confession, forgiveness is uncertain and absolution precarious. All such teaching tends to make the priest a necessity to the personal approach of the soul to God, and is opposed to the contents of the New Testament and to the customs of the primitive Church. What is necessary, is that every penitent should confess daily his sins before the Great High Priest and receive direct from Him "perfect remission and forgiveness". This he can do without any priestly mediation whatever. The only mediatorial priesthood is that of Christ Himself. Every one may come to God through Him, and coming, will find that "He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy gospel". The oft-quoted text, "Whosoever sins ye remit," etc. (St. John xx. 23), must be explained by two facts. Firstly, the words were addressed not to the Apostles only, but also to the disciples. "The commission, therefore, must be regarded properly as the commission of the Christian society and not as that of the Christian ministry."<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the interpretation of the words must be looked for in the Acts of the Apostles. From it we learn how the commission was understood by the early Church. In proclaiming with authority the conditions of remission and forgiveness, the Church was the instrument by which sins were remitted and retained. "We need to remember that the ministry of the Word is carried out in the power of the Spirit. It is this Divine force which through its human organ, looses or binds, removes or seals sin."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "St. John," Westcott.

<sup>2</sup> "Gospel of St. John," Godet.

## PART III.

### CHAPTER VII.

#### GENERAL POLICY—I.

##### SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

HAVING established the position of Evangelical or Central Churchmanship historically and ecclesiastically and explained its fundamental principles, we must now turn to questions of general policy, and consider the methods to be adopted to preserve and promote our convictions in the Church at large.

It will be obvious that the acceptance of the foundation truths as stated above, leaves plenty of room for diversity on matters not essential. As a matter of fact, there is a considerable variety in our methods of interpretation, worship, and work. We differ amongst ourselves on minor matters, at least, as much as other schools of thought. Nor is there any disadvantage in this. It is indeed the sign of healthy life. The unity of vitality expresses itself in a variety of forms. One is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren, each with his own distinct and separate personality, and therefore with his own peculiar apprehension of truth.

1. Some, e.g., prefer a plain service and a mixed choir, while others, recognizing the claims of culture and the younger generation, have adopted a musical service with a surpliced choir as aids to worship, in an age when worship is increasingly difficult. None of us, however, can consent to anything that is lacking in order or beauty, cleanliness or seemliness. Order is

heaven's first law, and God is the author of beauty. The Church ought, therefore, to set the standard for all that is beautiful and orderly. Moreover, the spirit of reverence and worship is assisted by such things, which, after all, are not mundane but heavenly. Everything, therefore, that will contribute to develop in man the consciousness of God must be encouraged by Evangelicals. The structure of the building, the appointments of the interior, the arrangement of the services, the conduct of the clergy and choir, the movements of the wardens and sidesmen, all must bear witness to the realized presence of God. Nothing that is unclean, irreverent, disorderly, discordant, or even unlovely, must be permitted to remain in His house. We must see to it, that as far as lies in our power, the people worship in the beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty.

2. We ought to define more clearly and persistently the distinctive doctrines to which our consciences pledge us, wherein we agree with and differ from our fellow Churchmen, what are the views of the infinite truth we have been permitted to see. That there is much confusion of thought regarding Evangelical Churchmanship is only too patent. We are frequently called what we are not, and what we are we are not called. We find it necessary to explain and sometimes to protest, but do not seem sufficiently to see that our first duty is to define. Mere negation is of little value. Men are more disposed to listen to affirmations than declamations. They care less and less wherein we think others are wrong, than in what we claim to be right.

3. We ought to instruct more widely and constantly our fellow Churchmen in the faith we hold. The necessity for this elementary duty is more urgent than many suppose. Some who call themselves "Evange-

lical " do not know what the word, viewed historically and doctrinally, denotes, and if *we* do not know *what* we are, nor *why* we are what we are, we cannot be surprised if we are misunderstood by others. Again, there are some who are Evangelical even though they hesitate, or possibly refuse, to call themselves by this name. Holding the essentials of the faith as we understand them, they nevertheless stand apart from us, and in some cases because of the intolerance of men whose vain hope seems to be to contract Evangelicalism within the sphere of their own narrow views. Further, there are some who, born of Evangelical parents and reared in Evangelical circles, when they leave their home and Church, drift or are drawn from us, and not seldom because they have not been grounded in the faith or taught to differentiate between the essentials and the accidents. These mistakes might be remedied and these losses prevented by a wise and forceful system of instruction. That our defects in this particular are being remedied is proved by the recent issue of "The Anglican Church Handbooks" and of "English Church Manuals," which may be regarded generally as the authoritative teaching of the Evangelical school on the subjects of which they treat. Is it not possible for us to co-operate more widely and successfully with the publishers<sup>1</sup> in promoting the circulation of these invaluable productions? The pulpit, the parochial magazine, and other methods of recommending them are open to us, if only we were more intelligently zealous for the furtherance of our own cause.

4. We ought to adjust more firmly and courageously Evangelical doctrines and methods to the times in which we live. There can be no doubt, in the mind of the ob-

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.

servant, that the age is essentially one of change, unrest, transition. Movement, if not always progress, is in evidence everywhere. We are passing through a period fraught with momentous consequences. Continued re-adjustment is called for. We must be courageous and resourceful. I know it is said, that Evangelical doctrines cannot change with a changing age. The Gospel of Christ—which is Christ—must be “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever”. We dare not sacrifice principle to expediency, nor truth to popularity. All this is true, but if doctrines do not change, their method of interpretation cannot remain always the same, if the Gospel be unchanging, its application must vary, if the faith was once for all delivered to the saints, its proclamation must be in the terms of the day. It is a bold statement to make, which some may question, but I am confident that many of the clergy are reading only the books which satisfied the needs of our fathers, and are speaking to their people in the language of a past age.

5. We ought to unite more vigorously in all diocesan and general movements for the common good. Nothing is gained by isolation, and much is lost. The policy of abstention is simply the death sentence. Nothing lives if it lives to and for itself. Life is only sustained and developed by fellowship and service. Ruridecanal and diocesan committees and conferences ought never to lack the Evangelical witness, and yet they frequently do. Some shrink from an unsympathetic environment and some from inevitable minorities. Let us fear neither, but courageously face both, resolved to change atmospheric conditions and win spiritual victories. Such results are more possible than the pessimistic believe, but even if they were otherwise, we surely dare not shirk our duty because it is difficult, nor desert our

post because it is unpleasant. Besides which, it is sometimes within our power to make difficult duties less irksome, and unpleasant tasks more pleasing. *Suaviter in modo* and *fortiter in re* are two principles of action, which combined go a long way in disarming opposition, dispersing prejudice, and securing success. But is co-operation with Churchmen of other schools of thought as difficult or even unpleasant as some would have us suppose? If experience may be quoted in argument, I do not hesitate to say, it is not. The truth is, that the spirit of the age is more conciliatory and the attitude of Churchmen towards each other is more brotherly, than in days past. Hostility is being driven out by charity and suspicion dispersed with knowledge. As earnest men know each other better, they love each other more. But assuming for the moment that experience differs and opinions vary, I still maintain that it is incumbent upon every Evangelical to take his part in the general work of the diocese and the corporate life of the Church. A sense of duty to ourselves requires this. If we are Churchmen, let us prove it. If we admit that we are a part of a whole, do not let us act as if we were the whole, and not a part. If we have a mission to the whole Church, then to the Church as a whole, we must fulfil it. If we have a message to our fellow Churchmen, then to our fellow Churchmen we ought to declare it. Abstention has the appearance not so much of fidelity as cowardice. Isolation from Diocesan work is, at least in my judgment, a betrayal of a holy trust and a dereliction of solemn responsibility. Again, a sense of duty to the Church requires us to co-operate with our fellow Churchmen. Only by co-operation can we contribute to the common life. Only by fellowship can we make known what we are. Only by working with

our brethren can the household of God complete its witness. Only by Evangelicals striving together with other schools of thought, can they impart their thought to other schools. Finally, a sense of duty to the Lord demands from us the spirit of co-operation. If we believe that our view of truth is a trust, as it assuredly is, not to be received and withheld, but discharged and proclaimed, then above all things let us be faithful. If with a sincere and unshaken confidence we regard our principles as most in accordance with the teaching of the New Testament, then we are bound, by the most solemn obligations, to seek to diffuse them everywhere, but most of all and first of all, in and through our own Church.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### GENERAL POLICY—II.

#### THE NEED FOR A SPIRITUAL REVIVAL.

THE permanent and paramount need of every Christian and of the whole Church, is unquestionably the culture and development of the spiritual life. The first and greatest thing to be considered, is not what we claim to be historically, ecclesiastically, doctrinally, or practically, but what we are spiritually. The spiritual is the real. What we are spiritually, we really are. Before all things it is necessary, therefore, that we maintain and develop our fellowship with the Living Lord, by His Spirit dwelling in us. The knowledge of our need may be obtained by the measure of our influence. If influence be the effluence of character—the power of personality—how far are we being conformed to the image of Christ and transformed into His likeness? To what extent is His life manifesting itself in and through us? Is the power of His personality dominating and permeating ours, so that more and more our influence is decreasing and His is increasing? In the degree in which we surrender our hearts to the Spirit, He lives in us. Not only is Christ's life increasingly ours, but our work becomes increasingly His. If we are growing more like our Master and Lord, it is because He is living more in us. If we are losing power in our ministry, it is because we need to be refilled by His Spirit. In a word, the condition of our spiritual life determines

the nature and extent of our influence in the Church and the world.

Now without yielding to the temptation of exaggerating our defects or depreciating our powers, I confess to being greatly concerned with the spiritual condition of the Church as a whole, and of ourselves in particular. If we may judge of a power by the effect it produces, none of us can examine the results of our work with any degree of satisfaction—indeed with nothing but humiliation. The moral state of the nation bears witness to the spiritual efficiency of the Church, and what is this natural witness? It is that the Church is not the restraining, purifying, inspiring power it ought to be. Our work expresses our life. Our life conditions our work. Feeble work discloses a lowered vitality. Increased vitality produces better work. What then is needed, with a priority and urgency no words can exaggerate, is a spiritual revival, a requickening of the life of the Church by the Holy Ghost. That this revival is both needed and possible, we all admit. But do we all see the signs of its approach? What is the meaning of the widespreading consciousness of the want of power in our common work? How are we to interpret the increasing desire for a fuller fellowship, a closer communion, which, in various ways, is expressing itself in the life of the Church? Are not the conscious want and desire arousing in men's hearts the sense of need for more prayer—personal and united? What is the explanation of the growing interest in definitely spiritual activities? Other answers may be given to these questions, but mine is, that they are the sure and certain signs of a coming revival. As in the first days of the Church, a time of preparation preceded the pentecostal baptism of power. The "incubation period"—as the

late Professor Bruce described the ten days' waiting for the promise of the Father—was certainly a period of spiritual unity, intercessory prayer, and whole-hearted consecration. By thus obeying the Lord and yielding to the preparatory and anticipatory work of His Spirit, the Early Church was ready "when the day of Pentecost was fully come" for the fulness of blessing. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Then followed the witness of power issuing in the cry of awakened hearts: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Conviction of sin was met by the preaching of the Crucified yet Risen Lord. Repentance, faith, baptism resulted in the same day, "about three thousand souls" being added to the Church. "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." The principles of the primitive Church are the norm of the Church to-day. What they did, we must do. Then, and then only, will their experience be ours. The attitude of God towards the Church continues unchanged. He is still waiting to endue the weakest member with the fulness of His power. The revival will come when we are ready to receive it. A new era is about to dawn, but are we preparing ourselves for it? That the process of preparation is proceeding before our eyes is evident. In witness thereof, let me refer to three recent movements, all of which betoken the Spirit's increased activity amongst us. (1) The growth of the C.E.M.S., with its definite pledges of prayer and work. (2) The rise of Church Conventions for the deepening of spiritual life. (3) The spread of "quiet days" and "retreats" for clergy and Church workers.

Each movement has its own distinctive characteristics. Taking the last first, an increasing number of the clergy

are realizing the dangers incident to their calling and the need of seeking deliverance therefrom, by periods of withdrawal from work for fellowship with God. This I regard as one of the most significant signs of the coming revival, inasmuch as the spiritual condition of the clergy is the chief determining factor in the spiritual character of their congregations. "Like priest, like people" is a true proverb. What we are, the faithful become. The pastor is, speaking generally, reflected in his flock. The same principle applies also to Church workers. The quality of their work depends on their spiritual fitness and power. Hence arises the need for "quiet days" and other periods for replenishing the needed grace for service.

Again, the rise of diocesan Conventions for the development of spiritual life is a sign of the times we ought to welcome with all our hearts. "Keswick" has taught the Church many lessons, prominent amongst which, is the holding of definite meetings for devotional purposes. Birmingham and other dioceses have adopted the same method on definite Church lines, with spiritual results which in our case were described by our Diocesan<sup>1</sup> and by almost every invited speaker, as "wonderful". To this testimony I can only add my seal. The unifying influence of the spiritual life underlying all ecclesiastical differences was so evidently felt at the time, while since then the quickening power realized at the Convention continues not only as a holy memory but also as a precious possession. The Bishops ought, I submit, to convene from time to time the communicant members of the Church to be instructed and edified by the seers and prophets God has raised up amongst us.

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Gore.

At any rate, the experiment has been tried and proved to meet a real spiritual need.

Lastly, the rise of the C.E.M.S. is a remarkable witness to the developing life of the Church on its manward side. Men are realizing as never before their spiritual responsibilities both in worship and service. Here surely we have a great opportunity which no fear or suspicion ought to keep us from availing to the full. The society is pledged to freedom from all party bias and is worked parochially as may be deemed best for the peculiar needs of each parish. It calls up into active fellowship and service the spiritual sympathies of the laity—alas! too frequently latent—and whilst not interfering with their distinctive views on matters ecclesiastical, widens the outlook of its members. No one can possibly foresee what this agency, with its inconceivable potentialities for God and the world, may yet accomplish in the Church, especially amongst the men of the country, but that it is destined to become one of the greatest spiritual forces of modern times, I have no doubt.

But after all, these are simply the signs of a reviving life and of the coming revival. What concerns us most is their relation to the revival itself, and the part in its preparation, which Evangelicals are called to take. What is to be our attitude towards it? How far are we co-operating in hastening the day of quickening? What is the present condition of the Evangelical party viewed spiritually? Is our faith as strong, our zeal as keen, our love as true, as in days past? Are we as devoted, unworldly and self-sacrificing as were our fathers? Does our ministry centre round the atoning death and risen life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Do we preach the truth of God with the

same fidelity and the love of God with the same fervency? Are the careless convinced of sin, the anxious led to Jesus, the wanderers restored, the backsliders reclaimed? Are conversions taking place in our Churches and parishes? What is the spiritual state of our communicants, and what proportion do they bear to our congregations? Are our people loving more, giving more, and doing more? These are solemn heart-searching questions, and yet they ought to be asked and answered. A devout High Churchman has said "the glory of Evangelicals lies in their vivid sense of the reality of the relation between man and God, in their strong faith in the divine mercy, in their passionate devotion to the person of our Lord, in the abundant love of others they display—in short, in the vital character of their Christianity—a good Evangelical deserves the sincere reverence of Christian people. He ranks high among the saints."<sup>1</sup> May God give us grace to prove ourselves more worthy of those whose character won for themselves, and the cause, such a reputation. This, however, can only be as there is a return on our part to first principles. Another "Evangelical revival" beginning with Evangelicals, is what is most needed. The whole Church indeed calls for a requickening of the spiritual life, a refilling with the Holy Ghost, a renewal of the power of Pentecost. If this be our first and greatest need, then our first and foremost work, is to confess in penitence our faithlessness, our failures and our faults, and with the confession, pray for the casting out of everything in us which is contrary to the mind of Christ, for an entire emptying of all that is of self and sin. Then, if in full and glad surrender, we reconsecrate ourselves to our Master and our mission, we "shall receive power"

<sup>1</sup> "Church Principles," Lord Hugh Cecil.

by a fresh filling of the Divine Spirit for witness-bearing in word and work. Then at last, then and not before, but then surely, will the Church "filled with wisdom," "filled with power," "filled with all the fulness of God," go forth "conquering and to conquer," until "the kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ," and "God be all in all". Amen.

SECOND EDITION. Crown 8vo. Price 2s. 6d. net.

# GOD AND THE SINNER

OR

SOME FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OF CHRISTIANITY,

ILLUSTRATED FROM

THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

BY THE RIGHT REV.

J. DENTON THOMPSON, D.D.,

BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN

---

"The Rector of Birmingham discerns the signs of the times. He lives and works in the present, and this volume of his will bring a welcome message of cheer, hope, and guidance. Strong and faithful teaching of the Evangelist is everywhere found within its pages."—*The Record*.

"Marked by that directness of utterance and plainness of speech which are so characteristic of their author."—*Church Family Newspaper*.

"A book which cannot fail but to make for good."—*The Church Times*.

"An inspiring and helpful series of addresses."—*The Church Gazette*.

"The original edition was widely appreciated, and we prophesy for this a wider circulation still."—*The Churchman*.

"It is a plain, practical exposition of some of the great principles of religion. It is as little controversial, as simply addressed to the heart and conscience, as possible."—*The Spectator*.

"Although the old, old story is here, it is told with a freshness of thought, a beauty of diction, and a wealth of illustration that carries you on from chapter to chapter until you close the book with a sense of deep gratitude to the author for the inspiration and spiritual uplift of his winged words."—*Liverpool Courier*.

"Interesting and practical."—*Daily News*.

"Free from theological subtleties—manly and direct."—*Oxford Times*.

"From beginning to end it is written in the spirit and language of experimental religion. All who love the Bible will recognize and enjoy the author's masterly knowledge of its contents."—*Daily Post and Mercury*.

---

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.,

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON,

NEW YORK, BOMBAY AND CALCUTTA.

## PROBLEMS OF CHURCH WORK.

---

"The volume is healthful and stimulating. Its manly utterances are impressive; its spiritual tone is excellent."—*The Guardian*.

"Throughout there is an unfailing unity of purpose which is well brought out in the arrangement of the sixteen chapters, and gives the volume the enduring value of a connected, consecutive, and cumulative whole."—*The Record*.

"Marked by wide experience, sanctified common-sense, definite purpose, clear statement, and spiritual force."—*The Churchman*.

"Each chapter is marked by originality of thought, independence of view, and breadth of treatment, such as is rarely met with in papers of this kind."—*The Layman*.

"The merit of the book is its manly outspokenness."—*The Church Family Newspaper*.

"The problems are fairly faced in the light of a 25 years' ministry in spheres of great responsibility, and if a solution is not found for all of them, their frank, fearless, sober handling cannot fail to bring the solution nearer."—*Church Missionary Review*.

"The problems are dealt with in a way which shows that the author has pondered them long and earnestly, and the book is sure of the appreciation of the thoughtful reader."—*The Bookseller*.

"The Rector of Birmingham's utterances are imbued with candour and effectiveness which can only come from the courage of conviction. There is a pleasant freedom from cant phraseology which renders his observations on these and other subjects highly readable."—*Birmingham Daily Mail*.

"It displays marked felicity in expressing Evangelical truths, and in attempting to solve social difficulties in the light of simple religion."—*Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*.

"A volume of high ideals. 'Applied Christianity,' if set upon the title page, might have indicated the tone and temper of these essays."—*Birmingham Daily Post*.

---

GEORGE ALLEN & CO., LTD.,

44 RATHBONE PLACE, OXFORD STREET, LONDON.





BX Thompson, James Denton, Bp. of Sodor and  
5125 Man, 1856-1924.

T5 Central churchmanship; or, The position,  
principles and policy of evangelical church  
in relation to modern thought and work.  
London, New York, Longmans, Green, 1913.  
xvi, 94p. 20cm.

"First printed ... 1911."

1. Evangelicalism--Church of England. I.  
Title.



CCSC/mmb

A023454

